

by the same author

THADDEUS STEVENS

973.31
Ad

60/5/5 59.65
3/5/09

32582

Samuel Adams

SELECTIONS FROM HIS WRITINGS

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION, BY

ELIZABETH LAWSON

INSTRUCTOR, JEFFERSON SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE



International Publishers

New York

577 57

COPYRIGHT, 1946, BY
INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS CO., INC.
PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.



72

973.31
HJ

CONTENTS

SAMUEL ADAMS—ORGANIZER AND PROPAGANDIST

by Elizabeth Lawson 7

- I. The Fight of the Colonies
Against Oppression 43
 - II. The American Revolution 80
 - III. Democracy and the New Nation 85
- REFERENCE NOTES 93

TO E. M.



SAMUEL ADAMS—ORGANIZER AND PROPAGANDIST

BY ELIZABETH LAWSON

"The fear of the peoples abusing their liberty," wrote Sam Adams in the year that opened the War of Independence, "is made an argument against their having the enjoyment of it; as if anything were so much to be dreaded by mankind as slavery."¹

As if anything were so much to be dreaded by mankind as slavery! In that sentence Sam Adams summed up his life, and disclosed the impulse that drove him. In the single-mindedness which it reveals, lies the secret of the hatred that is borne him by historians and biographers who follow in the Federalist tradition.*

For you cannot transform Sam Adams into a figurehead of respectability; you cannot empty his work of its revolutionary content. The meaning of that work is unmistakable; you must take it as it is. And if such teaching is alien to you, if you dread any one thing more than slavery, you are bound either to ignore Sam Adams or to denounce him, for you will never make his words and his actions signify anything but this.

The revolution was his life; in its service he was inflexible. When at times the tide receded, when merchants wavered, and wondered if the end were worth the sacrifice, Sam Adams was among those who still pressed forward. "Where there is a spark

* The Federalist Party, a reactionary party led by Alexander Hamilton, dominated the American government from its inception to the election of Jefferson in 1801.

of patriotic fire," he wrote in an era of discouragement and apathy, "*we will enkindle it.*"² For the achievement of American independence and American democracy, he planned and wrote and spoke, and investigated and exposed, and argued and pleaded, and organized and built, and when the structure he built crumbled, as it often did, he built again. Incessantly he beat against the stone wall of absolutism, and in the end the wall went down before the onslaught of the American revolution.

His torrential energies were sluiced through a dozen channels. Although writing was only one of his many activities, his known work, bearing seventeen different signatures, fills more than 1800 printed pages;³ how much more was destroyed for the sake of revolutionary security, no one will ever know. "I have seen him cut up with his scissors," said John Adams years later, "whole bundles of letters in atoms that could never be reunited, and throw them out of the window to be scattered by the winds. This was in summer, when he had no fire."⁴

He was a giant among the theoreticians of democracy. He studied and popularized the best work of the democratic thinkers of his age and the ages before. In the columns of the *Boston Gazette*, he set forth the ideology of the political philosopher John Locke so that it entered into the common talk of artisans and mechanics. Look! said Sam Adams to his countrymen, to the dockworkers, the ropemakers, the sailmakers, the printers, the farmers. Look! the king, his nobles, his royal representatives, are no more than you or I or any other man; we are as fit to govern as they!

The theme of all revolutionists of the time was the rights of man; in the mouth of Sam Adams this meant, not the rights of merchants only, but the rights of common laboring folk. He knew that it was they alone who possessed the decisiveness to push the timid businessmen to action. It was in their hands that he placed the enforcement of boycotts and non-importation agreements. And it was to their advice that

he listened, as on the occasion when he was called upon to ratify the federal Constitution. In his elected capacity of Moderator, he enlarged the town meeting, Boston's governing body until 1822, to include not merely the property holders, who alone had a legal right to attend, but every man who wished to be present. It was the complaint of the province's royal governors that when Sam Adams presided over a gathering, there were "very few gentlemen there."⁵

ORGANIZER OF THE MASSES

Above all he was an organizer—the most able organizer brought forward by the American revolution. He moved among masses and he moved masses; it is impossible to think of Sam Adams except in the setting in which he was best content—in meeting-houses, revolutionary caucuses, conventions. In the Caucus Clubs, which gathered in a tavern room or above the printshop of the *Gazette*, he trained those who were to become the leaders of the revolution in Massachusetts—John Hancock, Joseph Warren, John Adams, Paul Revere. There he discussed the resolutions to be introduced into town meetings and laid the plans for the struggle against British domination. That the plans of the Caucus Clubs were so frequently accepted by the Boston town meeting and by the colony as a whole, was due, not to Adams' being a dictator, as many historians claim, but rather to the fact that his policies were generally correct.

He was the builder of the Sons of Liberty, the first mass organization of Americans to oppose British regulations. He was an architect of colonial unity: as father of the Boston Committee of Correspondence, which sent messengers on horseback clattering along the roads to Philadelphia, Trenton, Hartford, New York, he helped lend to thirteen diverse colonies oneness of purpose.

Each new imposition of autocracy was a challenge to stiffen

his resolution. He led the agitation that pushed the redcoats from Boston. He fought unjust taxation; planned boycotts that hit at British purses and British complacency; pressed his arguments against British-imposed revenues until tea worth 18,000 pounds sterling was swallowed up by the waters of Boston harbor. And then, when retaliation closed the port and threatened the town with starvation, Adams organized activities that brought into Boston gifts of food and clothing and money from a thousand miles away.

His alertness never slept; he was a goad and a gadfly to laggards. "Your presses have been too long silent. What are your Committees of Correspondence about?" ⁶ he wrote to the revolutionists in Massachusetts while he worked in the Continental Congress in Philadelphia. When the battle of Lexington inaugurated the era of armed resistance, he fought to block every move towards negotiated peace, calling incessantly for unconditional independence.

And he ended his career as he began it; that, in the eyes of the Federalists, was his unforgivable sin. With independence won, Sam Adams entered the fight for popular government. The freedom of the American merchants to trade, was not to him the end of the revolution, but its beginning. He was one of the prime movers in the struggle for the Bill of Rights. He was a friend to revolutionary France. He was the valued standby of Jefferson, an organizer of the Democratic-Republican forces in Massachusetts, and his last known writing rejoices in the election of Jefferson to the presidency, and the end of Federalist reaction and misrule. Only once did he fail the cause of democracy—on the occasion of Shays' rebellion in Massachusetts.

He was no more welcome in elegant Federalist drawing-rooms when he occupied the executive mansion of the state than in the days when his headquarters was the Green Dragon Tavern in Union Street, for his elevation had not abated his hatred of prerogative. Perhaps the depth of this Federalist contempt is the most accurate gauge of the greatness of Sam

Adams. Probably it was not only of Jefferson, but of himself as well, that he was thinking when he wrote to the newly elected President:

"The world has been governed by prejudice and passion which can never be friendly to truth; and while you nobly resolve to retain those principles of candor and of justice resulting from a free elective representative government, such as they have been taught to hate and despise, you must depend upon being hated yourself, because they hate your principles." ⁷

Those who do not share Sam Adams' passion for liberty, are disturbed by him, vaguely embarrassed by his earnestness. To the historian John C. Miller, he was a "backstairs politician" and a liar. "Boston," sneers Miller, "was controlled by a 'trained mob' and Sam Adams was its keeper." ⁸ The biographer Ralph Volney Harlow, in a volume devoted to proving that American colonial grievances were imaginary, says that "Adams was not entirely normal, and he was probably a neurotic; in any case, he was nervously unstable. Just what sort of nervous weakness it was is not clear, but this with various other symptoms, would mark Adams as an interesting 'case' for the psychoanalyst." ⁹ When love of liberty is equated to neurosis, historiography has fallen very low indeed.

How different was the opinion of Thomas Jefferson, to whom Adams was "truly a great man, wise in council, fertile in resources, immovable in his purposes." To Adams himself, Jefferson wrote in 1801: "I have often asked myself, is this exactly in the spirit of the patriarch, Samuel Adams? Will he approve of it? When I have been told that you were avoided, insulted, frowned on, I could not but ejaculate, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!' " ¹⁰

THE MAKING OF A REVOLUTIONIST

There are biographers who find the source of Sam Adams' revolutionary spirit in the fact that his father lost money in a bank crash; that Sam had to wait on table at Harvard, at a time when Harvard listed its students in order of social importance; and that he was unsuccessful in his father's brewing business, as an employee in a counting-house, and in all his subsequent business endeavors.

All this may—or may not—be important in evaluating the psychology of Sam Adams. Granted, for the sake of argument only, that his personal status bred discontent. There were millions of people everywhere in the world who had as much cause for discontent, or more. Significant for us is the answer to the question: why did the discontented spirit of Sam Adams travel the path of revolution? To this problem the age and place that bred him must give the answer.

When Sam Adams was born in Boston on September 22, 1722, the American colonies presented two aspects, only apparently contradictory. They were dependencies of the most ruthless imperialism of the day; in the eyes of the merchant class of England, they were areas to be sucked dry of their wealth and resources; colonial development and welfare were matters of no account to the masters in Manchester and London.

Yet in their manner of thought, these colonies were the freest spot on the globe. Here were territories in which, despite the most determined efforts of British proprietors, feudalism never took root; in which land was plentiful and laborers scarce, so that the status of the laboring classes was better than anywhere else in the world; in which the population consisted in large degree of rebels fleeing poverty and persecution in Europe.

In such an atmosphere, unquestioning acceptance of an established order had no place whatever. These self-sufficient men and women sought their own answers. They made an

everyday practice of the theories of Europe's revolutionists; from earliest colonial days they demanded a measure of self-government; and what British regulations they did not approve, they casually ignored or impudently defied.

Of this environment was Sam Adams, in psychology a typical American. He was the great-great-grandson of Henry Adams, English immigrant and founder of the family in the new world. His father was a brewer and merchant, a leader in the New England struggles against British impositions, the author of Boston's earliest declarations of grievances, an influential member of the Caucus Club, an organization of dockworkers, mechanics, and tradesmen, which exercised a profoundly democratic influence on Boston politics.

Young Sam Adams was graduated from Harvard in 1740, and in 1743 received there his degree of Master of Arts, choosing as his subject the affirmative of the question, "Whether it be lawful to resist the Supreme Magistrate, if the Commonwealth cannot be otherwise preserved." Five years later he founded, together with a few friends, a newspaper, the *Independent Advertiser*, which lasted about a year, and which exposed the wrongs visited upon Massachusetts by the royal governor and the aristocratic members of the colony who depended on British patronage and favor.

"TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION IS TYRANNY!"

In the year when Sam Adams reached the age of 41, Great Britain brought to a victorious close its seven-years war with France, the last nation to contend with her for mastery in the mercantile and colonial world. That year, 1763, therefore marked a fork in the road for Britain's possessions in America, and, incidentally, for the career of Sam Adams.

Free at last of Continental wars, Britain resolved to take in hand her unruly colonials. For a decade these Americans,

largely unsupervised, had traded where they pleased, in defiance of the mother country's Navigation and other acts, which so aimed to regulate the trade of the colonies as to draw off into British purses the major share of profits from commerce.*

Now warships patrolled the coast of America to seize smuggled goods; the Ministry began preparations to station an army of 10,000 soldiers in the colonies; blanket warrants, called Writs of Assistance, enabled British officials to search ships, homes, warehouses on suspicion. To wipe out smuggling; to nip the growth of the American merchant class, competitors of the merchants of Britain; to force the colonies to supply a share of revenue through taxation; to smother the growing participation of common folk in public affairs—these were the aims of Parliament. But the year was 1763, and already it was too late. The native American forces of production had grown beyond the relations which the mother country sought to impose on them.

First of the new acts of taxation was a revised schedule of duties on imported molasses. Such duties had existed since 1733; now, in 1764, they were to be rigidly enforced.

But, asked Sam Adams in a document which he drew up for adoption by the Boston town meeting, in the form of instructions to its elected representatives in the Massachusetts House,† “if our trade may be taxed, why not our lands? Why not the produce of our lands, and everything we possess or make use of? This, we apprehend, annihilates our charter right to govern

* “...after all proper allowances have been made for bounties and other preferences, the net burden imposed upon the Thirteen Colonies by the restraints upon the trans-Atlantic trade was between two million and seven million dollars a year.”—L. A. Harper, “Mercantilism and the American Revolution,” in *The American Historical Review*, March, 1942, p. 6.

† The Massachusetts assembly was made up of two chambers: a lower, which was the House of Representatives, composed of men directly elected; and an upper, the Council, made up of members selected from the lower house. The powers of the assembly were limited, and all its acts were subject to the royal veto.

and tax ourselves. If taxes are laid upon us without ever having legal representation where they are laid, are we not reduced from the character of free subjects to the miserable state of tributary slaves?"¹¹ This statement was the first to deny the right of Parliamentary taxation, and contains also the first suggestion of joint action by the colonies.

In closely knit arguments, driven home to Americans by constant repetition, Sam Adams and other democratic leaders asserted the right of the colonies to be free of all taxation except that which they imposed upon themselves. This privilege they derived from the right of man to property, which was, according to all revolutionary theoreticians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, one of the inalienable rights of man. A series of resolutions drawn up by Adams and passed by the House of Representatives in 1765, at the height of the struggle over taxation, is one of the most complete discussions on this point. Its thesis is based in large part on John Locke's second treatise "Of Civil Government," the Bible of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Like all the democratic thinkers of the day, Sam Adams accepted its major propositions: that government is a man-made institution, involving a contract between those who govern and those who are governed; that there are rights which nature gives to man which no government can abrogate; and that these are the rights to life, liberty, and property.

The resolutions of the Massachusetts House declared that the British Constitution granted to all Englishmen certain rights founded in the law of God and nature; that, by virtue of Magna Charta, of the Provincial Charter granted to Massachusetts by the King, and of their English citizenship, the colonials were entitled to these rights equally with residents of the mother country; that no man could take the property of another, by taxation or otherwise, without his consent—that is, without his being represented in the body that determined taxation.¹²

The colonists did not wish Parliamentary representation,

but the right to exercise their powers on the spot through their elected legislatures; this Adams made clear in a document which he signed together with several other members of the Massachusetts assembly, to which he had been elected by the Boston town meeting in 1765. "When we plead the right of representation," they wrote, "we only mean to have our not being represented considered as a reason why we should not be taxed by the Parliament. We are far, however, from desiring any representation there, because we think the colonies cannot be fully and equally represented; and if not equally, then in effect not at all. A representative should be well acquainted with the internal circumstances of the people whom he represents." ¹³

"LIBERTY, PROPERTY, AND NO STAMPS!"

The first sharp clash over Parliamentary taxation was the fight against the Stamp Act, in which Sam Adams climbed to unquestioned leadership of the Massachusetts radicals.

England in 1765 placed upon the colonists a tax in the form of stamps to be affixed to all newspapers, commercial papers, and legal documents. Lacking the stamps, the papers would lack legality. The stamps were to be bought from British officials appointed for the purpose, with offices in the colonies. There were fines for evasion of the law; the sentences were to be imposed and carried out, without jury trial, by special courts of the Admiralty.

Speaking in opposition to the proposed law, Isaac Barré, a member of Parliament, referred to the colonists as sons of liberty. Soon afterwards, America was honeycombed with organizations that bore this name, made up chiefly of laborers and craftsmen.¹⁴ Some sprang up to fight the new tax measure; others had been in existence for years as lower-class groups struggling against undemocratic practices. They turned immediately to the task of the hour, resistance to the Stamp Act.

The Boston Sons of Liberty originated in the Caucus Clubs; among other Sons of Liberty they were pioneers and trail-blazers, for their leader was the master organizer and propagandist, Sam Adams.

For many years after 1765, August 14 was celebrated in Massachusetts by all good revolutionists. Some time during the previous night, an effigy of Andrew Oliver, stampmaster of Massachusetts, was set swinging from a great tree, thereafter called the Tree of Liberty. On August 14 the effigy was cut down and publicly burned. Sons of Liberty demolished the stamp office. Oliver promised to resign his post. Twelve days later, the people wrecked the home of Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Hutchinson.

The masses took into their own hands enforcement of the stamp boycott. Parades shouted: "Liberty, property, and no stamps!" A poster, affixed to trees, fences, houses, gave warning: "The first man that either distributes or makes use of stamp paper, let him take care of his house, person, and effects." ¹⁵

So business went on—without stamps. Shipping entered and left Boston port—without stamps. Citizens bought and sold property, deeded real estate, made wills—without stamps. To a friend in England, Sam Adams wrote: "Such a spirit in every colony has had the same effect, and there is not a man who dares to put the act in execution." ¹⁶

A year earlier, Adams had urged an intercolonial Congress; the proposal had foundered upon the rocks of the merchants' hesitations and timidities. Now the Massachusetts House again brought the plan forward. There was immediate response, for the Stamp Act, unlike former British impositions, was felt by merchants and artisans, by large planters and small farmers.

In October, therefore, the Stamp Act Congress met in New York, foreshadowing the Continental Congresses and the Congress of the United States. Nine colonies sent delegates; the other four sent endorsements. The Congress issued a Declara-

tion of Rights and Grievances—the colonies' first joint statement—and agreed on a continued boycott of British imports.

Less than a year afterwards, the Stamp Act was repealed. In the streets of America were fireworks and flags and music, and immense public feasting and drinking.

The first common defiance of Britain had forced the swift retreat of the world's mightiest mercantile power. Never again, after that triumph, would any colony act alone. "Happy was it for us that a union was then formed, upon which the fate of the colonies turned," wrote Sam Adams. "What a blessing to us has the Stamp Act eventually proved, which was calculated to enslave us. When the colonies saw the common danger, they at the same time saw their mutual dependence. . . . such friendships and connections are established between them, as shall for the future deter the most virulent enemy from making another open attempt upon their rights as men and subjects." ¹⁷

Of the struggle that led to the repeal of the Stamp Act, Adams said later: "The people shouted, and their shout was heard to the distant end of this continent. In each colony they deliberated and resolved, and every stampman trembled, and swore by his maker that he would never execute a commission which he had so infamously received." ¹⁸

THE REDCOATS INTO BOSTON

There were some for whom the repeal of the Stamp Act meant the end of the struggle; Sam Adams was not among them. A victory it had been, but partial and temporary only. For attached to the repealer, was a Declaratory Act, asserting the authority of Britain to make laws binding on the colonies, "in all cases whatsoever." Basing itself on this clause, Commons in 1767 imposed upon Americans a duty on paper, glass, paints, and tea—the Townshend Acts, so called after the British Minister of the Exchequer.

This new assertion of British authority the Massachusetts colonists were well prepared to meet, for people's gains in the elections to the House had strengthened the hand of the radicals. Together with James Otis, Adams had prepared a black-list of members of the assembly who had indicated approval of the Stamp Act, and had published this list in the *Gazette*. Further, he had insisted upon the open, rather than the secret, casting of votes by representatives, and had followed James Otis in demanding—with success—the opening of a public gallery in the House where those whom the royal governors called "the rabble" might watch the transaction of business. More and more, therefore, the Massachusetts legislature became a tribune of defiance, and in time an organ of revolution.

As a result of the publicity given to the affairs of the House, 19 Tories in the assembly were in 1766 replaced by 19 Patriots. Sam Adams became clerk of the body.

When news arrived of the Townshend duties, Adams, recalling that inter-colonial unity had proved the key to success in the fight against the Stamp Act, urged Massachusetts to write to the other colonies a letter to prepare the way for common action.

"It seems to be necessary," said the Circular Letter which Adams drafted together with other members of a committee, and which was dispatched to the speakers of all colonial houses on February 11, 1768, "that all possible care should be taken, that the representations of the several assemblies upon so delicate a point, should harmonize with each other."¹⁹

The colonial legislatures adopted the Circular Letter with enthusiasm. Britain demanded that Massachusetts rescind the letter; the House defied the demand, and was dissolved by the governor.

The temper of the people was aroused; there followed a series of attacks upon the Customs Commissioners, who were charged with collecting port duties. The most serious of these were in connection with the seizure of John Hancock's boat, the *Liberty*, for its attempt to land a cargo of smuggled wine.

It was events like these that determined the royal governor and Parliament to fill the town with redcoats. Although Governor Bernard gave no official notice of the coming of troops, the espionage apparatus of the Patriots worked well.

In September, therefore, Bostonians in their town meeting adopted with straight faces a resolution reminding the people that by a law of the province, "every householder shall be always provided with a well fixed firelock musket accoutrement and ammunition." The pretext was thin and deceived no one—"a prevailing apprehension, in the minds of many, of an approaching war with France."²⁰

In place of the assembly that had been dissolved, Adams, with no sanction but that of revolutionary necessity, called together representatives of Massachusetts cities. A Boston town meeting addressed itself to all the colony, urging the election of delegates to a conference in the metropolis, to take whatever steps were necessary to ward off "French invasion." Seventy men came together at Faneuil Hall, being in almost every instance the members of the dissolved House of Representatives. The resemblance to the House did not escape the royal governor, who demanded—in vain—that the body disperse, remarking that "it is not the calling it a committee of convention that will alter the nature of the thing."²¹

So in October, 1768, in the hope of bringing Boston to its knees, seven armed men-o'-war landed two regiments of British troops in Boston harbor, ordered from their posts in Halifax. Past crowds that lined docks and streets, the troops marched from Long Wharf to the Common, and Boston became in effect a garrisoned town.

THE BOSTON MASSACRE

The soldiers, to whom the Boston selectmen, under Adams' leadership, had denied accommodation, found quarters in special buildings at the expense of the crown. They planted two

cannon on King Street, with muzzles pointing symbolically to the Town House, meeting place of the assembly.

For two years Sam Adams led the fight to liberate Boston from the redcoats. He widened his journalistic sphere. Hitherto his printed words had reached readers in Boston and in surrounding Massachusetts through the *Gazette* alone. He now began to send articles first to New York, whence they were distributed to newspapers all over the colonies. From the day the troops stepped onto the Boston wharves to the day, two years later, when they were marched away, Sam Adams kept constantly before the people of all the colonies the autocratic meannesses and the downright brutalities of these armed representatives of British imperialism in America.

"There is something in it," wrote Adams in an article signed "Vindex," "which looks as if the town was altogether under the government and control of the military power.

"Are we a garrisoned town, or are we not? If we are, let us know by whose authority and by whose influence we are made so.

"Is Boston disfranchised? When and for what crime was it done? Will the spirits of people as yet unsubdued by tyranny, unawed by the menaces of arbitrary power, submit to be governed by military force?"²²

On March 2, 1770, there were fights between local workmen and the soldiers of the 29th Regiment. Three days later, the troops posted an insulting handbill. That night was frosty; there had been a light snowfall during the day, and the pavements were thinly coated with ice. An unusual number of people wandered the streets: soldiers with cutlasses, and, eyeing them, groups of men and boys carrying sticks and canes. There were several encounters: a barber's apprentice taunted a British soldier; the soldier struck the boy with his musket. A crowd gathered before the headquarters of the 14th Regiment, known as Murray's Barracks, and pelted the soldiers outside with snowballs.

Meanwhile, someone had lifted a small boy through a win-

dow into the Old Brick Meeting House to ring the bells. The throngs increased in King Street where the main body of the Boston troops was stationed. A man recognized the soldier who had earlier in the evening assaulted the barber's apprentice, and the citizens attacked him with snowballs and sticks.

Suddenly, shoving his way through the crowd, appeared Captain Preston, officer of the guard for the day, and a file of seven soldiers, pricking the citizens with their bayonets. The order was given the soldiers to prime and load. The crowd pressed up to the muzzles of the guns, struck the bayonets with sticks, threw snow in the soldiers' faces, and dared them to shoot. Without warning, one of the soldiers brought his gun to his shoulder and fired, and then, in quick succession, the other six discharged their muskets.

The first to fall was Crispus Attucks, a fugitive Negro slave, now a sailor and a member of the Sons of Liberty. Another sailor and a ropemaker were killed instantly. A joiner's apprentice was wounded, dying next day; an apprentice to a leather-breeches maker died nine days later.

The church bells rang out, hundreds poured into the streets; the Lieutenant-Governor arrived to order the troops to quarters.

Faneuil Hall next day was the scene of one of the largest town meetings yet held in Boston. Adams, putting aside his usual quiet manner on the platform, roused the citizens to demand the withdrawal of the troops. An elected committee, headed by Adams and John Hancock, laid the demand before Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson and the Council. And the soldiers were marched out of the city.

It was now Sam Adams' aim to bring the soldiers to justice for the murder of Boston citizens. Even after the trial, at which two of the redcoats were found guilty of manslaughter, Adams kept public anger burning by constant reiteration of the events of the massacre. A series of articles in the *Gazette*, signed "Vindex," retold the story at length.

"I will take the liberty," said Adams, "to lead the reader

back to a consideration of the temper the soldiers discovered, and their correspondent conduct, for some time before the fatal tragedy was acted . . . for some time before the fifth of March, they gave out many threats, that on that very night the blood would run down the streets of Boston, and that many who would dine on Monday would not breakfast on Tuesday." ²³ And so on and on, in detail that showed painstaking care in interviewing witnesses to the murders in King Street.

For many years thereafter, an annual meeting recounted the events of March 5, 1770. The observance was originally proposed by a Boston town committee, of which Adams was a member.

HOMESPUN AND SASSAFRAS

During the two years when the people of Boston learned that by determined action they could force imperial troops off the streets, they were becoming aware of yet another power which they could exercise at will—economic pressure through refusal to import British goods.

A non-importation agreement made in 1765, had proved a valuable weapon in the fight against the Stamp Act. The Townshend duties renewed the impulse to non-importation. A Boston town meeting called for an end to purchases from Britain.

Adams, together with other patriots, now urged a scheme which was to have fruition only a century later—America's economic independence through native industry. A beginning, at any rate, was now made, as the women of the colonies spun and wove, and children gathered sassafras root, to circumvent the need for British woolens and tea.

If the plan was to meet with success, the merchants of all colonies must participate. Hence, renewed activity to consolidate intercolonial unity—activity carried on by corresponding committees of the Sons of Liberty.

This wall of resistance was not, however, as solid as it appeared. There were fissures. Tory merchants not only continued to trade with Britain, but became wealthy by their defection from the rules to which others adhered. Even among the merchants who opposed British regulations, many were indecisive and wavering: their principles could not always withstand the temptation of a shilling.

There were weapons to force the merchants into line. One was ostracism. Adams prepared, for a town meeting in 1769, a list of importers to be boycotted. Another was to place enforcement in the hands of the people themselves. The Sons of Liberty organized demonstrations before the homes of violators, whom they serenaded as "bastards of liberty." Pickets walked before the shops of recalcitrants. With Sam Adams at their head, citizens marched to merchants' offices and demanded that the goods be turned over. The Sons of Liberty observed storekeepers' sales and consumers' purchases, searched records, took inventories, dumped contraband. They examined the manifests of incoming vessels, and if undesired goods were aboard, they seized them, locked them in storage, and held the key. They organized a secondary boycott of refractory merchants, one poster proclaiming: "William Jackson, an importer, at the Brazen Head, North Side of the Town House, and opposite the Town Pump, in Cornhill, Boston. It is desired that the Sons and Daughters of Liberty would not buy any one thing of him, for in so doing they will bring disgrace upon themselves, and their posterity, forever and ever, amen." ²⁴

Together with an occasional tarring and feathering, these measures brought the merchants into line.

It was now that the Tories began to use the despised word "liberty." Their hypocrisy Sam Adams exposed in a vigorous letter in the *Gazette*, signed "Determinatus."

The Tory merchants, noted Adams, had now "put on the appearance of the Sons of Liberty; and their cry is, Where is that liberty so much boasted of and contended for? We hear them very gravely asking, Have we not a right to carry on our

own trade and sell our own goods if we please? This is the language of those who had before seen the axe laid at the very root of all our rights with apparent complacency." He concluded: "If this agreement of the merchants is of that consequence to all America which our brethren in all the other governments think it to be—if the fate of unborn millions is suspended upon it, verily it behooves not the merchants only, but every individual of every class to insist upon its being strictly adhered to." ²⁵

Soon all the Townshend Acts were repealed, except one. With the repeal came the collapse, on the merchants' initiative, of the non-importation agreement, against the advice of Adams and the radicals, whose objective was the abolition not merely of this or that tax, but of the very principle of imperial taxation. For the time being, however, Adams and his co-workers were overruled by the merchants' eagerness to come to terms with England so they might once more sell her goods.

Of the exception to the general repeal of the Townshend Acts, that exception being the tax on tea, the world was soon to hear. The colonists faced it armed with a new weapon of intercolonial unity, the Committees of Correspondence, whose creator was Sam Adams.

THE COMMITTEES OF CORRESPONDENCE

Corresponding committees were not new to the colonists. Merchants fighting the Molasses Act; Sons of Liberty fighting the Stamp Act; Boston citizens spreading word of the massacre of 1770—all these had opened communication between town and country, between colony and colony. Thus far, however, correspondence had been irregular, organized sporadically to meet the problem of the moment.

Now Sam Adams pressed home the need for standing committees, whose constant duty would be to circularize the colonies. Under the name of "Candidus," he wrote in 1771 in

the *Gazette*: "I have often thought that in this time of common distress, it would be the wisdom of the colonists more frequently to correspond with and to be more attentive to the particular circumstances of each other. It seems of late to have been the policy of the enemies of America to point their artillery against one province only; and artfully to draw off the attention of the other colonies. The colonies 'form one political body, of which each is a member.' The liberties of the whole are invaded. It is therefore the interests of the whole to support each individual with all their weight and influence." ²⁶

In 1772, therefore, Adams in town meeting brought forward a motion to appoint a Boston committee of correspondence, and 21 men were chosen, of whom 18 were Sons of Liberty. Sam Adams was, of course, a member. At once the committee undertook communication with rural Massachusetts, for it was conscious that the welding of unity between town and country was one of its important tasks. Each Massachusetts town now appointed a committee of correspondence of its own.

In Virginia, patriots who four years before had urged a plan of regular and uninterrupted intercolonial correspondence, noted the events in Massachusetts, and in 1773, through the medium of the House of Burgesses, Virginia's elective assembly, adopted a resolution for the establishment of such committees in all colonies. The sister colonies received the resolution with approval.

So, when ships loaded with British tea started the voyage to America, no colony stood alone. The Committees of Correspondence had spun a web that bound every colony to every other.

TEA OVERBOARD

The East India Tea Company, with headquarters in England, was overstocked; if its wares could be forced upon the colonials, the Americans would be made to bail the company out of its difficulties and at the same time provide a revenue for England. The proposed sale of the tea in America, directly to consumers without the intervention of American middlemen, at a price even lower than the smuggled article, would destroy Dutch competition and wipe out the business of American tea merchants. The monopoly of the East India Tea Company once certain, the price could be raised. And, not least important, a precedent would have been established; the resistance of the colonies to taxation by Parliament would have been broken.

Sam Adams scented danger. Two years earlier, in an article in the *Gazette*, under the signature of "Candidus," he had warned Boston. He reminded the town of its past triumphs and set forth its present tasks. Yes, recalled Adams, the Stamp Act had been repealed. But, he went on, of the duties imposed on the colonies, "there remains enough to answer the purpose of administration, which was to fix the precedent. If therefore we are voluntarily silent while the single duty on tea is continued, we are in extreme hazard." He repeated the bitter tale of the landing of British soldiers, and closed with a paragraph whose aim was to shatter illusions: "... while there has been no essential alteration of measures, no real redress of grievances, we have no reason to think, nay we deceive ourselves if we indulge a thought that their hearts are changed. We cannot entertain such an imagination, while the revenue is extorted from us; while our principal fortress, within the environs of the town, remains garrisoned by regular troops, and the harbor is invested by ships of war."²⁷

And now came word of the new financial imposition. The movement against the tax on tea began—as did most progressive activities in the Boston of the day—with a meeting of

artisans. Then, for a town assembly that came together on November 5, Adams prepared resolutions which were adopted without a dissenting vote. The resolutions concluded with a warning and a command:

"That whoever shall directly or indirectly countenance this attempt, or in any wise aid or abet in unloading, receiving or vending the tea sent or to be sent out by the East India Company while it remains subject to the payment of a duty here, is an enemy to America.

"That a committee be immediately chosen to wait on those gentlemen, who it is reported are appointed by the East India Company to receive and sell said tea, and to request them from a regard to their own characters and the peace and good order of this town and province immediately to resign their appointment." ²⁸

Philadelphia and New York had already taken similar steps.

Action must be immediate; three ships loaded with tea had sailed into Boston harbor, making fast at Griffin's Wharf, setting the town bells ringing danger. A possibility of which the Sons of Liberty were aware was that, even if no duty were paid, the tea once landed could be stored and secretly smuggled from warehouse to consumer by British agents. It was therefore the demand of the Americans that the ships return at once to England, without unloading. But the governor could issue no pass for a return of the ships until duty had been paid, and British owners who made the voyage home without a pass would find their vessels confiscated.

In this circular dilemma, there was, for Boston, only one solution consistent with its liberties: the destruction of the cargo.

On December 14, and again on December 16, the people met at the Old South Church, a volunteer guard of the Sons of Liberty meanwhile patrolling the docks where the tea ships swung at anchor, ostensibly to protect the property, actually to prevent the cargo from being stealthily landed. At sunset of December 16, came word that the royal governor had re-

fused clearance papers. And Sam Adams, chairman of the gathering, stepped down from the platform with the quiet statement: "This meeting can do nothing more to save the country." At once, from the street outside, came a war-whoop of citizens who had been awaiting this signal.

Regarding what occurred on the Boston docks that night, Sam Adams wrote to Arthur Lee, London agent of the Massachusetts colony, a letter entirely factual, reciting with care the events in their order, the cities and towns involved, the numbers of men involved, the pounds of tea involved—a painstakingly exact accounting for the ledger of history, yet glowing with a sense of revolutionary accomplishment.

"I am now to inform you," wrote Adams, "of as remarkable an event as has yet happened since the commencement of our struggle for American liberty. The meeting of the town of Boston was succeeded by the arrival of the ship *Falmouth*, Captain Hall, with 114 chests of the East India Company's tea, on the 28th of November last. The next day the people met in Faneuil Hall, without observing the rules prescribed by law for calling them together; and although that hall is capable of holding 1200 or 1300 men, they were soon obliged for the want of room to adjourn to the Old South Meeting-House, where were assembled upon this important occasion 5,000, some say 6,000 men. Their resolutions you will observe in an enclosed printed paper. It naturally fell upon the [Committee of] Correspondence for the town of Boston to see that these resolutions were carried into effect. This committee, finding that the owner of the ship after she was unloaded of all her cargo except the tea, was by no means disposed to take the necessary steps for her sailing back to London, thought it best to call in the committees of Charlestown, Cambridge, Brookline, Roxbury, and Dorchester, for their advice and assistance. The people finding all their endeavors totally frustrated, dissolved the meeting. In less than four hours every chest of tea on board three ships which had by this time arrived, three hundred and forty-two chests, was thrown into the sea." ²⁹

Of this destruction, carried out by merchants, mechanics, dock-workers, farmers, disguised by blackened faces and outlandish rags, Adams wrote at once to Committees of Correspondence in other towns. The letter dispatched by fast couriers who left Boston on December 17, was brief, strictly to the point—for horses were saddled and riders were waiting; it was also a little breathless in its realization that an action had been taken which could never be recalled, and that Massachusetts and her sister colonies now faced tasks for which there were no guide-posts known. The hurried communication read:

"Yesterday we had a greater meeting of the body than ever, the country coming in from twenty miles round, and every step was taken that was practicable for returning the teas. The moment it was known that Mr. Rotch could not obtain a pass for his ship, a number of people huzzad in the street, and in a very little time every ounce of the tea on board of the Captains Hall, Bruce, and Coffin were immersed in the bay.

"The spirit of the people on this occasion surprised all parties who viewed the scene.

"We conceived it our duty to afford you the most early advice of this interesting event by express which departing immediately obliges us to conclude." ³⁰

BOSTON FACES STARVATION

Britain's answer to the tea party was the closing of Boston port. She would starve the inhabitants into submission, into reparation for the loss of her cargoes. Although other towns had also destroyed tea or refused to allow its landing, Boston, because of its years of intransigent leadership, was selected for cruel punishment.

If Parliament also hoped, by singling out one city, to end the growth of intercolonial unity, she succeeded only in binding the colonies more closely. For the first time in history,

relief from one center of rebellion to another was made a systematic activity. The organizational medium was the Committees of Correspondence.

Written by Sam Adams, borne by Paul Revere, a letter from the Boston Committee sped to New York and Philadelphia; from Philadelphia fresh riders hurried southward.

"We have received," wrote Adams in haste, "the copy of an act of the British Parliament wherein it appears that the inhabitants of this town are to be punished by the shutting up of the harbor.

"The town of Boston is now suffering the stroke of vengeance in the common cause of America. I hope that the effects of this cruel act will by the joint efforts of all be frustrated." ³¹

To the town whose port had been sealed, a stream of offerings poured by overland routes. From Massachusetts came rice, fish, olive oil; from Connecticut, wheat and corn; from Pennsylvania, flour and bread; from South Carolina, rice; from Maryland, pork; from North Carolina, peas; from New Hampshire, sheep and oxen; from Virginia, butter; from Rhode Island, clothing; from New Jersey, rye; from New York, meal and brandy; from Georgia, money; from Canada, wheat; from the West Indies, cocoa; and—perhaps most significant donation of all—from people in Great Britain, money to the sum of 154 pounds, 6 shillings, ninepence.³²

And Sam Adams was much encouraged and much occupied, for as a member of the Donations Committee appointed by a Boston town meeting, he must help to list, acknowledge, and distribute each gift. The records which he kept in those days are dry, statistical—and exciting. These dull receipts tell a story of growing solidarity among scattered colonies, intensified consciousness of a common cause.

And inevitably, of course, Sam Adams had to deal with Tory-inspired rumors that the relief committees were lining their own pockets and that favoritism accompanied the granting of aid.

To the closing of Boston port, the radicals among the colo-

nists urged further reply with a non-importation scheme wider in scope than any yet attempted—the end of all trade with England. The plan was known as “The Solemn League and Covenant.” But the merchants rejected the Covenant, fearing that the merchants of other towns might gain thereby.

THE FIRST CONTINENTAL CONGRESS

On June 17, General Gage, now governor of Massachusetts, learned that the colonial House, meeting in Salem—to which place it had been ordered removed with the hope of minimizing the influence of the Boston Sons of Liberty—was taking steps to send delegates to a Continental Congress proposed by the now proscribed House of Burgesses in Virginia. A secretary was dispatched with orders to dissolve the Massachusetts House at once, but the secretary found the doors locked, and no attendant could discover the key; Sam Adams had taken the precaution to put it into his pocket. The secretary read Gage’s order through the door, but none gave him attention, and the affair was symbolic of the stage which relations between England and the colonies had reached.

The delegates appointed by the colonies were to meet in Philadelphia in September. One of the Massachusetts representatives was, of course, Sam Adams. Probably his friends who caught a glimpse of him on his way to the Congress had a surprise. Although he was always a figure to attract attention, with a mass of prematurely white hair and sharp blue eyes, his clothing was simple, even a little shabby, for his sole income was the small stipend of a member of the House of Representatives, and on this he had been twice married and had six children. But a week before the Continental Congress there was delivered to the door of the Adams’ home a large trunk, donors unknown, containing “a complete suit of clothes, two pairs of shoes of the best style, a set of silver shoe-buckles, a set of gold knee-buckles, a set of gold sleeve-buttons, an

elegant cocked hat, a gold-headed cane, a red cloak.”³³ How Sam Adams felt when he was all dressed up like Thomas Hutchinson, history does not record.

Before the opening of the Congress, Adams had been warned not to raise the issue of independence, which he was among the first to favor. “You must not utter the word independence,” he was told privately at the outset by other delegates. “You are thought to be too warm.”³⁴ But the Congress at any rate adopted a Declaration of Rights, and the colonies organized themselves into a Continental Association which pledged itself to import no goods from Britain. A non-consumption, or boycott, agreement was adopted also. The New England radicals, who were feared by more conservative elements, did not themselves introduce these resolutions; instead, Adams caucused with other colonial delegations, especially that from Virginia, and they brought the measures to the floor. Thus, by a winding route, many of the provisions of Sam Adams’ “Solemn League and Covenant,” at first rejected by the merchants, had become binding.

The fact that Congress adopted the “Suffolk Resolves,” drawn up by a Massachusetts convention then meeting in Suffolk County, on Adams’ initiative, while Adams was himself in Philadelphia, was also a victory for the radicals. Paul Revere rushed the resolves to Congress, which agreed to them, and that was a great step forward, for the Resolves called for disobedience to the Boston Port Bill, and pressed upon the citizens the duty of readiness to take up arms in defensive struggle. The signal for that struggle was to be the next march of British troops out of Boston and into the surrounding countryside, where the colonies had been secretly gathering arms and ammunition.

Twice before, Gage had sent troops to capture the colonists’ military stores—once at Portsmouth, Maine, whose citizens, warned by Revere, removed the weapons to another site; and again at Salem, where the British expedition failed because the people of Marblehead raised the North River bridge lead-

ing to the town. A third such attempt, Congress agreed, would meet forcible resistance.

When Gage ordered the Boston troops to march on Lexington and Concord on the night of April 18, 1775, the night that opened the war of the Revolution, he had in view two objects. He had determined to seize the stores of ammunition which the colonists were setting aside at Concord. On the road, the redcoats would pause at the village of Lexington where John Hancock and Sam Adams were in hiding at Parson Jonah Clark's. Gage had orders from England to ship the two leaders off to the mother country for trial in a courtroom whose judge and jurors would not, as in Boston, be Sons of Liberty. The charge was treason, and the penalty would be death.

But the contents of Britain's orders to Gage were known to the patriots even before they were known to Gage. And Paul Revere, in his ride to arouse the Minute Men who would oppose the march of the troops, stopped for a moment at the parsonage to warn the hunted leaders that the soldiers were approaching. He had a little difficulty in getting through the guard of citizens which mounted watch; then he was recognized, and Adams and Hancock entered a carriage and were off to Philadelphia. Back in Lexington, families tended their wounded and prepared burial for their dead. At Philadelphia the Second Continental Congress opened, with war already under way.

"FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES"

Now Sam Adams began to press in earnest the issue of independence, in a Congress most of whose members still desired reconciliation with Britain. Since 1765, in articles and letters, he had referred to the possibility of American separation, in a manner at first somewhat tentative and tangential, later more bold.⁸⁵

While one hundred thousand copies of Tom Paine's "Com-

mon Sense" urged the advantages of separation, Sam Adams, by speech and pen, labored to the same end. Adams' correspondence in the early months of 1776 is devoted largely to arguments on this score.

"Is not America already independent?" he wrote on April 3. "Why then not declare it? Because, say some, it will forever shut the door of reconciliation. Upon what terms will Britain be reconciled with America? . . . she will be reconciled upon our abjectly submitting to tyranny, and asking and receiving pardon for resisting it." ³⁶ Twelve days later he wrote again on "the necessity of a public and explicit declaration of independency," that "I cannot conceive what good reason can be assigned against it. Will it widen the breach? This would be a strange question after we have raised armies and fought battles with the British troops, set up an American navy, permitted the inhabitants of these colonies to fit out armed vessels, and torn into shivers their acts of trade." Independence, Adams went on to say, would make possible foreign alliances, among other advantages. But postponement of the issue would cause the people to grow weary of a war whose purpose was still unclear.³⁷

When by the end of April no declaration was as yet promulgated, Adams wrote: "I am disappointed, but I bear it tolerably well. There has been much to do to confirm doubting friends and fortify the timid." ³⁸ One of the specters which the wealthy planters and merchants in the Continental Congress most feared was the artisan democracy which had become bold under the leadership of such men as Sam Adams.

Slowly, however, others joined him. And on June 7, Richard Henry Lee, on behalf of the Virginia delegation, offered in Congress a resolution that "these colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states." And Jefferson wrote and rewrote for eighteen days, and on July 4 the Declaration was given to the world.

Commissioners arriving from England in 1778 brought the danger of a negotiated peace, and Sam Adams was one of the

first to perceive the peril. England's only design, he wrote, was "to retard our operations, till she can land her utmost force in America."³⁹ Only the people's vigilance, he knew, would avert the danger of peace without independence which Britain now proposed. Adams therefore published in the *Massachusetts Spy* a lengthy open letter to the commissioners; a letter defiant, contemptuous, concluding with the statement that "a dependence on Great Britain, however the same may be limited or qualified, is utterly inconsistent with every idea of liberty."⁴⁰

The Congress heaped tasks upon him—always and everywhere people would pile work upon the willing shoulders of Sam Adams. Jefferson wrote later that Adams "had a greater share than any other member [of Congress] in advising and directing our measures, in the Northern war."⁴¹ He was a member of the committee for disarming and suppressing the Tories, and wrote that severe measures against them "would be humanity shown to millions."⁴² He was a member of the group that drafted the Articles of Confederation, which united the newly formed states and by which they were governed from 1781 until the adoption of the Constitution in 1789. He was a member of the Committee on Foreign Alliances. He served on the Board of War, roughly equivalent to the War Department of our day, and on the Committee on the Northern War. He was a member of the committee to gather arms and ammunition, of the Committee of Claims, of the Committee on the State of the Treasury, and of the Medical Committee. He helped draft instructions to the group which Congress sent to consult with Washington on methods of supporting the army. He served on a committee to take steps for the safety of South Carolina, a large proportion of whose planters were Loyalists; on another committee to take measures for the defense of Virginia; on another to see to the fortification of the Hudson River; on the committee to examine into the qualifications of applicants for army commissions; on the committee to build a navy; on the committee to open

American ports to the trade of foreign countries. He worked in the Indian Department which made friendly overtures to the native tribes.

He fought in Congress for the severest measures of retaliation against the barbarities of the British soldiers to captured Americans. In the darkest days of the war, the winter of 1776, he was a member of the committee to prepare a public address to cheer the spirits of the Americans.

And he was chairman of most of the committees on which he served.⁴³

He was never an orator, and he spoke in Congress comparatively seldom, but he was listened to with respect. "As a speaker," Jefferson wrote of him many years later, "he could not be compared with his living colleague and namesake [John Adams]. But Mr. Samuel Adams, although not of fluent elocution, was so rigorously logical, so clear in his views, abundant in good sense, and master always of his subject, that he commanded the most profound attention whenever he rose in an assembly by which the froth of declamation was heard with the most sovereign contempt."⁴⁴

THE NEW NATION

"Monarchy seems to be generally exploded," wrote Adams in 1776 while the former colonies were erecting new state governments, "the aristocratic spirit which appeared to have taken deep root, now gives place to that of democracy."⁴⁵

This was the spirit which Adams was to carry into the Massachusetts Senate and into the Governor's chair. It did not endear him to the Federalists, who felt that the revolution should have closed with the successful end of the war. But to Sam Adams, as to Jefferson, the nation now stood only upon the threshold of revolution.

Among the many tasks which Adams felt obliged to carry out as President of the Massachusetts Senate, was that of

keeping the Tory refugees from returning to America, for he knew they would regain influence and press the country towards an undemocratic course. Another problem that in those years gave him particular concern, was the formation of the secret Society of the Cincinnati, a reactionary organization with monarchist aims, recruited from the wealthier ex-army officers. Adams hastened to expose the society as a "stride towards an hereditary military nobility."⁴⁶ This has puzzled many a historian who believes that since Adams led the Sons of Liberty when it was an illegal organization, he should for the sake of consistency have given the same encouragement to the illegal Cincinnati!⁴⁷

But it was also as president of the Massachusetts Senate that Sam Adams committed his sole betrayal of democracy.

Daniel Shays, a veteran of the Revolution, led the Massachusetts farmers in 1786 in an armed struggle against the confiscation of their land by wealthy creditors. After shutting courts that were foreclosing mortgages, they marched on Springfield arsenal. It was a rebellion in the best tradition of Sam Adams—and Adams turned against it. He pressed the Senate to suspend the writ of habeas corpus, and urged the authorities to send troops to crush the rebels. His explanation—that in a republic there were other methods of registering dissatisfaction—is thin rationalization, and on any other occasion would not have satisfied Adams himself. It is probable that he followed the lead of the artisans, who had themselves been misled by the merchants as to the intentions of the Shaysites. It is also probable that the Shaysites' desire for paper money, which the artisans did not share, helped repel the city folk from the movement as a whole.

Adams made a far better showing as a delegate to the Massachusetts Convention that was to decide for or against ratification of the federal Constitution. His early opposition was not groundless, for the Constitution was in many ways objectionable to democrats, and it took a man of Jefferson's stature to see the urgent need for its adoption despite defects.

Although Adams had argued constantly for the formation of a confederacy, he knew that under such a Constitution as had been drafted, federal power would certainly center, for a time at least, in the hands of the wealthier merchants and bankers, while the state governments were more easily subject to popular control. He noted, above all, the absence of a Bill of Rights, the guarantees of that liberty for which the country had warred for eight years.

But two events directed his mind towards ratification. First, 400 artisans and mechanics gathered at the Green Dragon Tavern and expressed themselves in favor of the Constitution. According to a story told by Daniel Webster, the resolutions passed at the Green Dragon were placed in Adams' hands by Paul Revere, who had acted as Moderator at the meeting. Webster's account runs:

" 'How many mechanics,' said Mr. Adams, 'were at the Green Dragon when these resolutions were passed?' 'More, Sir,' was the reply, 'than the Green Dragon could hold.' 'And where were the rest, Mr. Revere?' 'In the streets, Sir.' 'And how many were in the streets?' 'More, Sir, than there are stars in the sky.' " ⁴⁸

And then, in a meeting with leading Federalists, Adams was assured that the Constitution would be augmented by amendments securing the rights of states, providing for indictment by grand jury in trials for crime, and prohibiting Americans from accepting titles and offices from foreign princes.⁴⁹

So Adams returned to the Convention to vote for ratification. First, however, he spoke in favor of further amendments: for freedom of press, petition, and conscience; for the right of citizens to keep arms; and for strict regulation of the right of search and seizure. Although rejected by the Massachusetts Convention, these proposals were later realized as the first, second, and fourth amendments to the Constitution.⁵⁰

INTERNATIONALIST

With the death in 1793 of John Hancock, under whom Adams had served as Lieutenant-Governor, a much despised democrat became chief executive of that stronghold of Federalism, Massachusetts. In 1794, Sam Adams was re-elected by an overwhelming majority, carrying the election to the office for three successive years.

And as Governor he was still Sam Adams—of the Caucus Clubs and the Sons of Liberty—and he would never change, and the Federalists knew it. So fashionable hostesses excluded him by common consent from their tea parties, which were so very different from the one he had organized at Griffin's Wharf twenty years before.

His messages to the legislature during this period were concerned in large part with rendering aid to revolutionary France, against whom marched the armies of the crowned heads of Europe, with the blessing of American Federalists. "A war of kings and nobles against the equal rights of men," Adams called it. "... the nefarious design has been to crush the new formed republic in its infancy."⁵¹ He shocked upper-class Massachusetts by attending Civic Feasts where a French tri-color flew beside the American flag, and where he offered the toasts to the principles of the French Revolution.

That Britain was no friend to the United States, Adams was aware. "She seems to have meant no more than a truce," he wrote in a letter which virtually forecast the second war for independence two decades later, the War of 1812.⁵²

Thus it was a shock to Adams, as to all American democrats, when news arrived of the negotiation by John Jay in 1794 of a treaty with England, which bound the United States to her erstwhile oppressor instead of to revolutionary France. The Jay Treaty gave Britain freedom in commerce with the West Indies and opened to her the Mississippi River. Further, Americans were ordered to pay to Britain debts owing from before the revolution. American grievances such as the im-

pressment of seamen into the British Navy were overlooked.

It was inevitable that in the popular storm that broke over the heads of the treaty makers, Governor Adams of Massachusetts should become "one of the loudest brawlers," as a Federalist remarked.⁵³

To every problem which confronted him—excepting, always the farmers' rebellion under Shays—he offered a solution that looked toward progress. The cause of public schooling was very close to him; over and over again his messages as governor pressed the need for common schools. While the issue of Negro slavery was not then as burning as it later became, he hit out at slavery when he could. We know that it was while Adams led the Boston Sons of Liberty that Crispus Attucks, the escaped slave, became a leader among the dockworkers. We know also that when a friend presented his wife with the gift of a slave woman, Adams, always a poor man, promptly freed her and posted the bond of 50 pounds which Massachusetts required in such cases.

Adams' last years were a struggle against the principles espoused by his Federalist cousin, John Adams, then President of the United States. Sam Adams built in Massachusetts the Democratic-Republican Party that was to send Jefferson to the White House in 1801. Jefferson needed no abler lieutenant in New England than the Sam Adams who had built the Sons of Liberty.

Meanwhile, Federalist reaction had pushed through the Alien and Sedition Laws, which forbade criticism of government measures and government officials, and which violated every guarantee provided by the Bill of Rights. The Sedition Act struck home to Massachusetts; the bookkeeper of the *Independent Chronicle*, Abijah Adams, found himself in prison. And one day in 1799, Sam Adams, 76 years of age, lately chief executive of his state, paid a visit to the jail, expressing through the double bars of the cell his contempt for John Adams' laws. "Abijah Adams during his confinement,"

reported the *Chronicle*, "was visited by the proscribed patriot Samuel Adams." ⁵⁴

It was the last public act of his life. Illness overtook him, and he died on October 2, 1803; the ten Federalists in the United States Senate enjoyed the questionable pleasure of voting against the motion to wear thirty days' mourning.

But in any case he had lived to see Jefferson in the White House. "The storm is now over, and we are in port," ⁵⁵ he wrote in a happy letter to the new President. Jefferson on his part regretted that Adams' illness and age prevented his taking a cabinet post. "How much I lament," he wrote his old friend, "that time has deprived me of your aid! It would have been a day of glory which should have called you to the first office of the Administration. But give us your counsel, and give us your blessing, and be assured that there exists not in the heart of man a more faithful esteem than mine to you." ⁵⁶

However limited had been the aims of the merchant class in the war, a republic that could elect a Jefferson as its leader was the end for which Sam Adams, and the artisans, mechanics, and farmers, had played their part in the American Revolution.

The writings of Sam Adams included in this booklet have been arranged in three sections: The Fight of the Colonies against Oppression; the American Revolution; and Democracy and the New Nation. Within each section, the headings that precede Adams' words have been furnished by the editor. The reference notes will furnish the reader with the date, place, and occasion of the citation.

For the sake of ease in reading, the spelling and mode of punctuation have been modernized, and omissions in the Adams text are not always indicated. What is omitted, however, is matter which the editor considers repetitious, or extraneous to the main purpose of the document, or of little interest to today's readers. The editor believes that none of these omissions in any way alters the meaning and intention of Sam Adams.

I. THE FIGHT OF THE COLONIES AGAINST OPPRESSION

AGAINST THE STAMP ACT

At a time when the British American subjects are everywhere loudly complaining of arbitrary, unconstitutional innovations, the town of Boston cannot any longer remain silent without just imputation and inexcusable neglect.

By the royal charter granted to our ancestors, the power of making laws for our internal government, and of levying taxes, is vested in the general assembly; and by the same charter, the inhabitants of this province are entitled to all the rights and privileges of natural free-born subjects of Great Britain; the most essential rights of British subjects are those of being represented in the same body which exercises the power of levying taxes upon them, and of having their property tried by juries; these are the very pillars of the British Constitution, founded in the common rights of mankind. It is certain that we were in no sense represented in the Parliament of Great Britain when this act of taxation was made. And it is also certain that this law admits of our properties being tried in controversies arising from internal concerns by courts of admiralty without a jury. It follows that at once it annihilates the most valuable privileges of our charter, deprives us of the most essential rights of Britain, and greatly weakens the best securities of our lives, liberties and estates.

Moreover, this act, if carried into execution, will become

a further grievance to us, as it will afford a precedent for the parliament to tax us in all future time, and in all such ways and measures as they shall judge meet without our consent.

We therefore think it our indispensable duty, in justice to ourselves and posterity, as it is our undoubted privilege, in the most open and unreserved, but decent and respectful terms, to declare our greatest dissatisfaction with this law; and we think it incumbent upon you by no means to join in any public measures for countenancing and assisting in the execution of the same; but to use your best endeavors in the General Assembly to have the inherent, unalienable rights of the people of this province asserted and vindicated and left upon the public records, that posterity may never have reason to charge the present times with the guilt of tamely giving them away.¹

The colonists have as great a regard for right, liberty, and justice as any people under Heaven. And they generally have knowledge enough to discover when their rights are infringed. They hold themselves entitled to all the inherent and unalienable rights of nature as men, and to all the essential rights of Britons as subjects. The common law of England, and the grand leading principles of the British constitution, have their foundation in the law of nature and universal reason. Hence, one would think that British rights are in a great measure, unalienable—the rights of the colonists and of all men else. The American subjects are, by charters from the Crown and other royal institutions, declared entitled to all the rights and privileges of natural-born subjects within the realm, and with good reason, for as emigrating subjects they brought the rights and laws of the mother state with them.

When we plead the right of representation, we only mean to have our not being represented upon our own free election considered as a reason why we should not be taxed by the Parliament. We are far, however, from desiring any representation there, because we think the colonies cannot be fully and

equally represented; and if not equally, then in effect not at all. A representative should be, and continue to be, well acquainted with the internal circumstances of the people whom he represents.

The several subordinate powers of legislation in America seem very properly to have been constituted upon their [the colonists] being considered as free subjects of England, and the impossibility of their being represented in Parliament, for which reason these powers ought to be held sacred.

The American powers of government are rather to be considered as matters of justice than favor—without them they cannot enjoy that freedom which, having never forfeited, no power on earth has any right to deprive them of.²

THE TOWNSHEND TAXES

Since the last sitting of the General Court, divers acts of Parliament relating to the colonies have arrived here. And as the people of this province had no share in the framing those laws, in which they are so deeply interested, the House of Representatives, who are constitutionally entrusted by them, as the guardians of their rights and liberties, have thought it their indispensable duty carefully to peruse them; and having so done, to point out such matters in them as appear to be grievous to their constituents, and to seek redress.

The fundamental rules of the constitution are the grand security of all British subjects; and it is a security which they are all *equally* entitled to, in all parts of his Majesty's extended dominions. The supreme legislative in every free state derives its power from the Constitution...the several legislative bodies in America were erected, because their existence, and the free exercise of their power within their several limits, are essentially important and necessary, to preserve to his Majesty's subjects in America the advantages of the fundamental laws of the Constitution.

When we mention the rights of the subjects in America and the interest we have in the British Constitution, in common with all other British subjects, we cannot justly be suspected of the most distant thought of an independency on Great Britain.

It is the glory of the British Constitution that it hath its foundation in the law of God and nature. It is an essential natural right, that a man shall quietly enjoy, and have the sole disposal of his own property. This right is adopted into the Constitution. This natural and constitutional right is so familiar to the American subjects, that it would be difficult, if possible, to convince them that any necessity can render it just, equitable, and reasonable, in the nature of things, that the Parliament should impose duties, subsidies, talliages, and taxes upon them, internal or external, for the sole purpose of raising a revenue. The reason is obvious; because they cannot be represented, and therefore their consent cannot be constitutionally had in Parliament.

When the Parliament, soon after the repeal of the Stamp Act, thought proper to pass another act, declaring the authority, power, and right of Parliament to make laws that should be binding on the colonies in all cases whatever, it is probable that acts for levying taxes on the colonies, external and internal, were included. For the act made the last year, imposing duties on paper, glass, and so forth, as well as the Sugar Acts and the Stamp Act, are, to all intents and purposes, in form as well as in substance, as much revenue acts as those for the land tax, customs and excises in England.

It is observable, that though many have disregarded life, and condemned liberty, yet there are few men who do not agree that property is a valuable acquisition, which ought to be held sacred. Many have fought, and bled, and died for this, who have been insensible to all other obligations. Those who ridicule the ideas of right and justice, faith and truth among men, will put a high value upon money. Now, what property can the colonies be conceived to have, if their money may be

granted away by others without their consent? This most certainly is the present case, for they were in no sense represented in Parliament when this act for raising a revenue in America was made. The Stamp Act was grievously complained of by all the colonies. And is there any real difference between this act and the Stamp Act?

The original contract between the King and the first planters here, was a royal promise in behalf of the nation, and which till very lately it was never questioned but the King had a power to make; namely, that if the adventurers would, at their own cost and charge, and at the hazard of their lives and everything dear to them, purchase a new world, subdue a wilderness, and thereby enlarge the King's dominions, they and their posterity should enjoy such rights and privileges as in their charters are expressed; which are in general all the rights, liberties and privileges of his Majesty's natural-born subjects within the realm. The principal privilege implied, and in some of their charters expressed, is a freedom from all taxes, but such as they shall consent to in person or by representatives of their own free choice and election.

By the common law, the colonists are adjudged to be natural-born subjects. So they are declared by royal charter; and they are so, by the spirit of the law of nature and nations. No jurist, who has the least regard to his reputation in the republic of letters, will deny that they are entitled to all the essential rights, liberties, privileges and immunities of his Majesty's natural subjects, born within the realm. It must be considered, that by acts of Parliament the colonies are prohibited from importing commodities of the growth or manufacture of Europe, except from Great Britain, saving a few articles. This gives the advantage to Great Britain of raising the price of her commodities, and is equal to a tax. It is too obvious to be doubted, that by the extraordinary demands from the colonies of the manufactures of Britain, occasioned by this policy, she reaps an advantage of at least twenty per cent in the price of them, beyond what the colonies might

purchase them for at foreign markets. The loss therefore to the colonists is equal to the gain which is made in Britain. This in reality is a tax, though not a direct one. The same reasoning will hold good with respect to the many enumerated articles of their produce, which the colonies are restrained by act of Parliament from sending to any foreign port. By this restraint the market is glutted, and consequently the produce sold, is cheaper. Is it reasonable, then, that the colonies should be taxed on the British commodities here? The colonies have reaped no share in the lands which they helped to conquer, while millions of acres of those very lands have been granted, and still are granting to people, who, in all probability, will never see, if they settle them.

There is an English affection in the colonies towards the mother country, which will forever keep them connected with her, to every valuable purpose, unless it shall be erased by repeated unkind usage on her part. As Englishmen, as well as British subjects, they have an aversion to an unnecessary standing army, which they look upon as dangerous to their civil liberties.

The act enabling his Majesty to appoint Commissioners of the Customs to reside in America, has also been read in the House. It declares an intention to facilitate the trade of America, of which we cannot have any great hopes from the tenor of the commission.

The present regulations and proceedings, with respect to the colonies, we apprehend to be opposite to every principle of good and sound policy. A standing army, in the time of profound peace, is naturally productive of uneasiness and discontent among the people. And yet the colonies, by the Mutiny Act, are ordered and directed to provide certain enumerated articles; and the pains and penalties in case of non-compliance are evident, in the precedent of New York. It also appears that revenue officers are multiplying in the colonies with vast powers. The Board of Commissioners lately appointed to reside here, have ample discretionary powers given them to make

what appointments they please, and to pay the appointees what sums they please. The establishment of a Protestant Episcopate in America is also very zealously contended for. And it is very alarming to a people whose fathers, from the hardships they suffered under such an establishment, were obliged to fly their native country into a wilderness, in order peaceably to enjoy their privileges, civil and religious. Their being threatened with the loss of both at once, must throw them into a very disagreeable* situation. It may be well worth the consideration of the best politician in Great Britain or America, what the natural tendency is of a vigorous pursuit of these measures. We are not insensible that some eminent men, on both sides the water, are less friendly to American charters and assemblies than could be wished. It seems to be growing fashionable, to treat them in common conversation, as well as in popular publications, with contempt.

... we desire you would make known to his Majesty's Ministers the sentiments of this House, contained in this letter, and implore a favorable consideration of America.³

Let us take a short retrospect of American affairs. The opposition which the Colonies made to the detestable Stamp Act in the year 1765, finally operated its repeal. I am induced to call it a detestable act, not from a warmth of resentment against a measure which had it taken effect must have involved this whole continent in perfect absolute slavery, but from the cool dictates of reason. For though it was soon repealed, it yet created such a jealousy between the mother country and the colonies, as it is to be feared will never wholly subside; and for aught the promoters of it can tell will finally end in the ruin of the most glorious empire the sun ever shone upon, or at least may accelerate consequences, arising from American independence, which, whenever they happen, will be fatal to Britain herself. As a condition of the repeal, the friends of the

American cause, which was the cause of liberty, in the British House of Commons, were obliged to yield to a proposal, that an act should be passed expressly declaring a right in the King, Lords and Commons of Great Britain to make laws which shall be binding on the colonies in all cases whatever. The Americans, who not long before were viewed by the people of Britain in no better a character than the tawny aboriginal natives, were not so void of understanding, as to overlook the latent meaning of this act—they clearly understood the true intention of the words, “in all cases whatever,” and that a right of making revenue laws binding on the colonies was necessarily included. Thus Great Britain, instead of burying in eternal oblivion a claim so repugnant to the laws of reason and equity, and therefore so obnoxious to all the colonies, was induced at that critical season, and as I conceive, contrary to all the rules of sound policy, as far as she could, to establish it. And while she was through necessity, about to repeal one law for taxing the colonies, without their consent, she at the same time held up to them a claim, and in effect told them, that she was resolved to make another, or a thousand more, whenever she should be pleased to exercise the right she had assumed. Such were the councils which ruled in Britain then, and we all know what they have been since.

The Americans for the sake of restoring harmony, chose to treat this act with silence, at least till necessity should oblige them to remonstrate the ill effects of it. The repeal of the Stamp Act was received with universal joy.

... we find to our astonishment, that in addition to the act commonly called the Molasses Act, another American revenue law was made, and the colonies were again taxed without their consent, by those who never did and never can represent them. The colonies are more than ever united in a determined opposition to these acts, and I hope in God they will continue their opposition to them, till they are all repealed—till the locust and the caterpillars which now swarm among us, are driven off like chaff, and every American grievance is redressed....

troops were sent, which took the possession of this city in a manner unheard of but in an enemy's town.

Let any one imagine the distress of this people—a free city, I mean once free and still entitled to its freedom, reduced to the worst of tyranny—an aggravated tyranny! Where is the bill of rights, Magna Charta, and the blood of our venerable forefathers! In this dilemma to what a dreadful alternative were we reduced! *To resist this tyranny or submit to chains.* God forbid that free countries should ever again yield to tyranny! This has long been the unhappy fate of the world, while it was overspread with ignorance and enveloped in darkness. Mankind I hope are now become too enlightened to suffer it much longer.

The colonies have since had a temporary relief from the alternative before mentioned, by the public-spirited proposal of the merchants in the several governments, to withdraw their commercial connections with the merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain; which is esteemed by all judicious and well disposed persons as a noble sacrifice of their own private rights and a well-chosen expedient for the recovery of the public rights of their country.⁴

REMOVE BRITISH TROOPS

There is something in it, which looks as if the town was altogether under the government and control of the military power. And as long as the inhabitants are fully persuaded that this is not the case at present, and moreover hope and believe that it never will, it has a natural tendency to irritate the minds of all who have a just sense of honor, and think they have the privilege of walking the streets without being controlled.

I am informed that not less than nine gentlemen of character, some of them of the first families in this province, were stopped and put under guard the other evening, for

refusing to submit to this military novelty. And still more alarming, that even one of his Majesty's Council was stopped in his chariot in the day time when going out of town, under a flimsy pretence that possibly he might have concealed a deserter in his chariot, and was treated with insolence. I forbear to mention the constant practice of challenging, as it is called, the country people when passing and repassing upon their lawful business through the gates of the city, where a guard-house is erected upon land belonging to the public, and it is commonly said, without the leave or even asking the leave of the public.

Are we a garrisoned town or are we not? If we are, let us know by whose authority and by whose influence we are made so. If not, and I take it for granted we are not, let us then assert and maintain the honor, the dignity, of free citizens and place the military where all other men are, and where they always ought and always will be placed in every free country—*at the foot of the common law of the land*. To submit to the civil magistrate in the legal exercise of power is forever the part of a good subject; and to answer the watchmen of the town in the night may be the part of a good citizen, as well as to afford them all necessary countenance and support. But to be called to account by a common soldier, or any soldier, is a badge of slavery which none but a slave will wear.

Is there any one who dares to say that Americans have not the rights of subjects? Is Boston disfranchised? When and for what crime was it done? If not, is it not enough for us to have seen soldiers and mariners forejudged of life and executed within the body of the county by martial law? Are citizens to be called upon, threatened, ill-used at the will of the soldiery, and put under arrest, by pretext of the law military, in breach of the fundamental rights of subjects, and contrary to the law and franchise of the land? And are the inhabitants of this town still to be affronted in the night as well as the day by soldiers armed with muskets and fixed bayonets? Are these the blessings of government? Is this the method to recon-

cile the people to the temper of the present administration of government in this province? Will the spirits of people as yet unsubdued by tyranny, unawed by the menaces of arbitrary power, submit to be governed by military force? No! Let us rouse our attention to the common law, which is our birthright, our great security against all kinds of insult and oppression—the law which, when rightly used, is the curb and the terror of the haughtiest tyrant. Let our magistrates execute the good and wholesome laws of the land with resolution and an intrepid firmness. The boldest transgressors will then tremble before them, and the orderly and peaceable inhabitants will be restored to the rights, privileges, and immunities of free subjects.⁵

It is a very improbable supposition that any people can long remain free, with a strong military power in the very heart of their country, unless that military power is under the direction of the people, and even then it is dangerous.

I know very well that the whole continent of America is charged by some designing men with treason and rebellion, for vindicating their constitutional and natural rights. But I must tell these men on both sides the Atlantic, that no other force but that of reason and sound argument on their part will prevail upon us to relinquish our righteous claim. Military power is by no means calculated to convince the understandings of men. It may in another part of the world affright women and children, and perhaps some weak men, out of their senses, but will never awe a sensible American tamely to surrender his liberty . . . to a reasonable being there is nothing in military achievement, any more than in knight errantry, so terrifying as to induce him to part with the choicest gift that Heaven bestows on man.⁶

THE BOSTON MASSACRE

The trial of Captain Preston and the soldiers who were indicted for the murder of Messrs. Gray, Maverick, Caldwell, Carr and Attucks, on the fatal fifth of March last, occasions much speculation in this town.

I am free to declare my opinion, that a cause of so great importance, not only to this town, but to all his Majesty's subjects, especially to the inhabitants of cities and seaport towns, who are exposed to have troops posted among them, whenever the present administration shall take it into their heads in his Majesty's name to send them—such a cause, I say, ought to be fairly stated to the public, that we may from thence learn how far we are bound to submit to every band of soldiers we may meet with in the streets, and in what instances we may venture to interpose and prevent their murdering those whom we may think to be innocent persons without being liable to be censured for acting unlawfully, if we escape with our lives, or charged with bringing our blood on our own heads, if we should fall victims to their rage and cruelty.

... it was the judgment of his honor, that the soldiers could not justify themselves in firing upon the people without the order of the civil magistrate. Yet they did fire without such orders, and killed five of his Majesty's good subjects. How fatal are the effects, the danger of which I long ago mentioned, of posting a standing army among a free people! ⁷

I have already said that the soldiers in coming down from the main-guard to the custom-house behaved with an haughty air, that they abused the people as they passed along, pushing them with their bayonets and damning them; and when they had got to their post, they in like manner abused and struck innocent persons there who offered them no injury. And that they came down under a pretence of suppressing a riot, without a civil magistrate or peace officer, which ought always to be remembered, no one will dispute.

I will take the liberty to lead the reader back to a consideration of the temper the soldiers in general discovered, and their correspondent conduct, for some considerable time before the fatal tragedy was acted. It is well known indeed, that from their first landing their behavior was to a great degree insolent; and such as looked as if they had entered deeply into the spirit of those who procured them, and really believed, that we were a country of rebels and they were sent here to subdue us. But for some time before the fifth of March, they more frequently insulted the inhabitants who were quietly passing the streets; and gave out many threats, that on that very night the blood would run down the streets of Boston, and that many who would dine on Monday would not breakfast on Tuesday; and to show that they were in earnest they forewarned their particular acquaintance to take care of themselves. These things were attested before the magistrates by creditable persons under oath. Accordingly when the Monday evening came on, they were early in every part of the town armed with bludgeons, bayonets and cutlasses, beating those whom they could, and assaulting and threatening others. This behavior put the inhabitants in mind of their threatenings, and was the reason that those of them who had occasion to walk the streets, came out armed with canes or clubs. Between eight and nine o'clock, the soldiers in Murray's Barracks in the center of the town rushed out with their naked cutlasses insulting, beating and wounding the inhabitants who were passing along. This, in so frequented a street, naturally collected numbers of people who resented the injury done and an affray ensued. About the same time a difference arose in King street, between a sentry there and a barber's boy, who said to his fellow-apprentice in the hearing of the sentry, "There goes Captain —— who has not paid my master for dressing his hair." The sentry foolishly resented it, and words took place; and the boy answering him with pertness, and calling him a name, the sentry struck him. Here was the first assault in King Street. At the same time a gentleman not

living far from the custom-house, and hearing as he thought a distant cry of murder, came into the street, which he had just before left perfectly still, and to use his own words, "never clearer." He saw there a party of soldiers issue from the main-guard, and heard them say, damn them where are they, by Jesus let them come; and presently after another party rushed through Quaker Lane into the street, using much such expressions. Their arms glittered in the moonlight. These cried fire, and ran up the street and into Cornhill which leads to Murray's Barracks; in their way they knocked down a boy of twelve years old, a son of Mr. Appleton, abused and insulted several gentlemen at their doors and others in the street. Their cry was, damn them, where are they, knock them down; and it is supposed they joined in the affray there, which still continued. They also then cried fire, which one of the witnesses took to be their watch-word.

By this time the barber's boy had returned to the sentry with a number of other boys to resent the blow he had received. The sentry loaded his gun and threatened to fire upon them, and they threatened to knock him down. The bells were ringing as for fire.

The ringing of the bells alarmed the town, it being supposed by the people in general there was fire; and occasioned a concourse in King Street which is a populous part of it. As the people came into the street, the barber's boy told them that the sentry had knocked him down. The cooler sort advised to go home. The curious were willing to stay and see the event, and those whose feelings were warmer, perhaps partook of the boy's resentment. At the barracks some, to use the expression of one of the witnesses, called out home, home; while some in their heat cried, huzza for the main-guard—there is the nest.

I would only ask how it came to pass that the soldiers, on that particular evening, should be seen abroad, in every part of the town, contrary to the rules of the army, after eight o'clock . . . a child may judge from the appearance they made,

that there had been a general combination, agreeable to their former threats, on that evening to put in execution some wicked and desperate design.⁸

THE NON-IMPORTATION AGREEMENT

The agreement of the merchants of this distressed and insulted continent, to withhold importations from Great Britain, it seems to be allowed on all sides, has the strongest tendency towards the repeal of the acts of parliament for raising a revenue in America without our consent. It is no wonder that it was opposed with so much vehemence at first by the cabal. When they could no longer with any face call it "the last efforts of a dying faction," they put on the appearance of the Sons of Liberty; and now their cry is, Where is that liberty so much boasted of and contended for? We hear them very gravely asking, Have we not a right to carry on our own trade and sell our own goods if we please? Who shall hinder us? This is now the language of those who had before seen the axe laid at the very root of all our rights with apparent complacency. And pray, gentlemen, have you not a right, if you please, to set fire to your own houses, because they are your own, though in all probability it will destroy a whole neighborhood, perhaps a whole city? Where did you learn that in a state of society you had a right to do as you please? And that it was an infringement of that right to restrain you? This is a refinement which, I dare say, the true Sons of Liberty despise. Suppose there was no law of the society to restrain you from murdering your own father, what think you? And is the liberty of your country of less importance than the life of your father? But what is most astonishing is, that some two or three persons, of very little consequence in themselves, have dared openly to give out that they will vend the goods they have imported, though they have solemnly pledged their faith to the body of merchants, that they should remain in store till

a general importation should take place. If this agreement of the merchants is of that consequence to all America which our brethren in all the other governments, and in Great Britain itself, think it to be,—if the fate of unborn millions is suspended upon it, verily it behooves not the merchants only, but every individual of every class in city and country to aid and support them and peremptorily to insist upon its being strictly adhered to! ⁹

AGAINST THE TAX ON TEA

We cannot surely have forgot the accursed designs of a most detestable set of men, to destroy the liberties of America as with one blow, by the Stamp Act; nor the noble and successful efforts we then made to divert the impending stroke of ruin aimed at ourselves and our posterity. The people shouted, and their shout was heard to the distant end of this continent. In each colony they deliberated and resolved, and every stamp-man trembled, and swore by his maker that he would never execute a commission which he had so infamously received.

We cannot have forgot, that at the very time when the Stamp Act was repealed, another was made in which the Parliament of Great Britain declared, that they had right and authority to make any laws whatever binding on his Majesty's subjects in America. How far this declaration can be consistent with the freedom of his Majesty's subjects in America, let any one judge who pleases. In consequence of such right and authority claimed, the Commons of Great Britain very soon framed a bill and sent it up to the Lords, wherein they prayed his Majesty to accept of their grant of such a part as they were then pleased, by virtue of the right and authority inherent in them to make, of the property of his Majesty's subjects in America by a duty upon paper, glass, painter's colors and tea. And although these duties are in part repealed, there remains enough to answer the purpose of administration, which was to

fix the precedent. If therefore we are voluntarily silent while the single duty on tea is continued, we are in extreme hazard.

Nor can we ever forget the indignity and abuse with which America in general, and this province and town in particular, have been treated, by the servants and officers of the crown, for making a manly resistance to the arbitrary measures of administration, in the representations that have been made to the men in power at home, who have always been disposed to believe every word as infallible truth. For opposing a threatened tyranny, we have been not only called, but in effect adjudged rebels and traitors to the best of kings, who has sworn to maintain and defend the rights and liberties of his subjects. We have been represented as inimical to our fellow subjects in Britain, because we have boldly asserted those rights and liberties, wherewith they, as subjects, are made free. When we complained of this injurious treatment, when we petitioned, and remonstrated our grievances, what was the consequence? Still further indignity; and finally a formal invasion of this town by a fleet and army in the memorable year 1768.

... while there has been no essential alteration of measures, no real redress of grievances, we have no reason to think, nay we deceive ourselves if we indulge a thought that their hearts are changed. We cannot entertain such an imagination, while the revenue, or as it is more justly styled, the tribute, is extorted from us, while our principal fortress, within the environs of the town, remains garrisoned by regular troops, and the harbor is invested by ships of war.¹⁰

Whereas it appears by an Act of the British Parliament passed in the last sessions, that the East India Company are by the said act allowed to export their teas into America, in such quantities as the Lord of the Treasury shall judge proper.

Resolved, that the disposal of their own property is the inherent right of freemen; that there can be no property in that which another can of right take from us without our consent; that the claim of Parliament to tax America, is in other words a claim of right to buy contributions on us at pleasure.

2. That the duty imposed by Parliament upon tea landed in America, is a tax on the Americans, or levying contributions on them without their consent.

3. That the express purpose for which the tax is levied on the Americans, namely for the support of government, the administration of justice, and the defence of his Majesty's dominions in America, has a direct tendency to render assemblies useless, and to introduce arbitrary government and slavery.

4. That a virtuous and steady opposition to the Ministerial plan of governing America, is absolutely necessary to preserve even the shadow of liberty, and is a duty which every freeman in America owes to his country, to himself, and to his posterity.

5. That the resolutions lately come by the East India Company, to send out their teas to America subject to the payment of duties on its being landed here, is an open attempt to enforce the Ministerial plan, and a violent attack upon the liberties of America.

6. That it is the duty of every American to oppose this attempt.

7. That whoever shall directly or indirectly countenance this attempt, or in any wise aid or abet in unloading, receiving, or vending the tea sent or to be sent out by the East India Company while it remains subject to the payment of a duty here is an enemy to America.

8. That a committee be immediately chosen to wait on those gentlemen, who it is reported are appointed by the East India Company to receive and sell said tea, and to request them from a regard to their own characters and the peace and good order of this town and province immediately to resign their appointment.¹¹

THE BOSTON TEA PARTY

I am now to inform you of as remarkable an event as has yet happened since the commencement of our struggle for American liberty. The meeting of the town of Boston was succeeded by the arrival of the ship Falmouth, Captain Hall, with 114 chests of the East India Company's tea, on the 28th of November last. The next day the people met in Faneuil hall, without observing the rules prescribed by law for calling them together; and although that hall is capable of holding 1200 or 1300 men, they were soon obliged for the want of room to adjourn to the Old South meeting-house, where were assembled upon this important occasion 5,000, some say 6,000 men, consisting of the respectable inhabitants of this and the adjacent towns. The business of the meeting was conducted with decency, unanimity, and spirit. Their resolutions you will observe in an enclosed printed paper. It naturally fell upon the correspondence for the town of Boston to see that these resolutions were carried into effect. This committee, finding that the owner of the ship after she was unloaded of all her cargo except the tea, was by no means disposed to take the necessary steps for her sailing back to London, thought it best to call in the committees of Charlestown, Cambridge, Brookline, Roxbury, and Dorchester, all which towns are in the neighborhood of this, for their advice and assistance. After a free conference and due consideration, they dispersed. The next day, being the 14th, the people met again at the Old South church, and having ascertained the owner, they compelled him to apply to the custom house for a clearance for his ship to London with the tea on board, and appointed ten gentlemen to see it performed; after which they adjourned till Thursday the 16th. The people then met, and Mr. Rotch informed them that he had according to their injunction applied to the collector of the customs for a clearance, and received in answer from the collector that he could not con-

sistently with his duty grant him a clearance, until the ship should be discharged of the dutiable article on board. It must be here observed that Mr. Rotch had before made a tender of the tea to the consignees, being told by them that it was not practicable for them at that time to receive the tea, by reason of a constant guard kept upon it by armed men. The people then required Mr. Rotch to protest the refusal of the collector to grant him a clearance and thereupon to wait upon the governor for a permit to pass the castle in her voyage to London, and then adjourned till the afternoon. They then met, and after waiting till sun-setting, Mr. Rotch returned, and acquainted them that the governor had refused to grant him a passport. You will observe by the printed proceedings, that the people were resolved that the tea should not be landed, but sent back to London in the same bottom; and the property should be safeguarded while in port, which they punctually performed. It cannot therefore be fairly said that the destruction of the property was in their contemplation. The people finding all their endeavors for this purpose thus totally frustrated, dissolved the meeting, which had consisted by common estimation of at least seven thousand men, many of whom had come from towns at the distance of twenty miles. In less than four hours every chest of tea on board three ships which had by this time arrived, three hundred and forty-two chests, or rather the contents of them, was thrown into the sea, without the least injury to the vessels or any other property.¹²

Yesterday we had a greater meeting of the body than ever, the country coming in from twenty miles round, and every step was taken that was practicable for returning the teas. The moment it was known out of doors that Mr. Rotch could not obtain a pass for his ship by the Castle, a number of people huzzad in the street, and in a very little time every ounce of the tea on board of the Captains Hall, Bruce and Coffin

were immersed in the bay, without the least injury to private property.

The spirit of the people on this occasion surprised all parties who viewed the scene.

We conceived it our duty to afford you the most early advice of this interesting event by express, which departing immediately obliges us to conclude.¹³

CLOSING OF BOSTON PORT

I am desired by the freeholders and other inhabitants of this town to inclose you an attested copy of their vote passed in town meeting legally assembled this day. The occasion of this meeting is most alarming. We have received the copy of an act of the British Parliament (which is also inclosed) wherein it appears that the inhabitants of this town have been tried and condemned and are to be punished by the shutting up of the harbor, and other ways, without their having been called to answer for, nay, for ought that appears without their having been even accused of any crime committed by them, for no such crime is alleged in the act.

The town of Boston is now suffering the stroke of vengeance in the common cause of America. I hope they will sustain the blow with a becoming fortitude; and that the effects of this cruel Act, intended to intimidate and subdue the spirits of all America will by the joint efforts of all be frustrated.

The people receive this edict with indignation. It is expected by their enemies and feared by some of their friends, that this town singly will not be able to support the cause under so severe a trial. As the very being of every colony, considered as a free people, depends upon the event, a thought so dishonorable to our brethren cannot be entertained, as that this town will now be left to struggle alone.¹⁴

CREATING INTERCOLONIAL UNITY

The House of Representatives of this province have taken into their serious consideration, the great difficulties that must accrue to themselves and their constituents, by the operation of the several acts of Parliament imposing duties and taxes on the American colonies.

As it is a subject in which every colony is deeply interested, they have no reason to doubt but your Assembly is duly impressed with its importance and that such constitutional measures will be come into as are proper. It seems to be necessary, that all possible care should be taken, that the representations of the several assemblies upon so delicate a point, should harmonize with each other. The House therefore hope that this letter * will be candidly considered in no other light, than as expressing a disposition freely to communicate their mind to a sister colony, upon a common concern in the same manner as they would be glad to receive the sentiments of your or any other House of Assembly on the continent.

This House have humbly represented to the ministry, their own sentiments that his Majesty's high Court of Parliament is the supreme legislative power over the whole empire. That in all free States the Constitution is fixed; and as the supreme legislative derives its power and authority from the Constitution, it cannot overleap the bounds of it without destroying its own foundation. That the Constitution ascertains and limits both sovereignty and allegiance, and therefore, his Majesty's American subjects who acknowledge themselves bound by the ties of allegiance, have an equitable claim to the full enjoyment of the fundamental rules of the British Constitution. That it is an essential, unalterable right in nature, ingrafted into the British Constitution, as a fundamental law and ever held sacred and irrevocable by the subjects within the realm, that what a man hath honestly acquired is absolutely his own,

* This document became known as the Circular Letter. It was received with enthusiasm by the legislatures of the other colonies. See p. 19.—*Ed.*

which he may freely give, but cannot be taken from him without his consent; that the American subjects may therefore, exclusive of any consideration of charter rights, with a decent firmness adapted to the character of free men and subjects, assert this natural and constitutional right. It is moreover their humble opinion, which they express with the greatest deference to the wisdom of the Parliament, that the acts made there imposing duties on the people of this province with the sole and express purpose of raising a revenue are infringements of their natural and constitutional rights because as they are not represented in the British Parliament his Majesty's Commons in Britain by those acts grant their property without their consent.

This House further are of opinion that their constituents, considering their local circumstances, cannot by any possibility be represented in the Parliament, and that it will forever be impracticable that they should be equally represented there and consequently not at all, being separated by an ocean of a thousand leagues; and that his Majesty's royal predecessors for this reason were graciously pleased to form a subordinate legislative here that their subjects might enjoy the unalienable right of a representation. Also that, considering the utter impracticability of their ever being fully and equally represented in parliament, and the great expense that must unavoidably attend even a partial representation there, this House think that a taxation of their Constituents, even without their consent, grievous as it is, would be preferable to any representation that could be admitted for them there.

Upon these principles, and also considering that were the right in Parliament ever so clear, yet for obvious reasons it would be beyond the rules of equity that their constituents should be taxed on the manufactures of Great Britain here, in addition to the duties they pay for them in England, and other advantages arising to Great Britain from the acts of trade, this House have preferred a humble, dutiful, and loyal petition to our most gracious sovereign, and made such repre-

sentations to his Majesty's ministers, as they apprehended would tend to obtain redress.

They have also submitted it to consideration whether any people can be said to enjoy any degree of freedom if the Crown, in addition to its undoubted authority of constituting a Government, should also appoint him such a stipend as it shall judge proper without the consent of the people and at their expense; and whether, while the judges of the land and other civil officers, hold not their commission during good behavior, their having salaries appointed for them by the crown independent of the people hath not a tendency to subvert the principles of equity and endanger the happiness and security of the subject.

In addition to these measures, the House have wrote a letter to their agent, Mr. De Berdt, the sentiments of which he is directed to lay before the ministry, wherein they take notice of the hardship of the act for preventing mutiny and desertion, which requires the governor and council to provide enumerated articles for the King's marching troops and the people to pay the expenses; and also of the commission of the gentlemen appointed Commissioners of the Customs to reside in America, which authorizes them to make as many appointments as they think fit and to pay the appointees what sums they please, for whose malconduct they are not accountable—from whence it may happen that officers of the crown may be multiplied to such a degree as to become dangerous to the liberty of the people by virtue of a commission which doth not appear to this House to derive any such advantages to trade as many have been led to expect.

These are the sentiments and proceedings of this House; and as they have too much reason to believe that the enemies of the colonies have represented them to his Majesty's ministers and the Parliament as factious, disloyal, and having a disposition to make themselves independent of the mother country, they have taken occasion in the most humble terms to assure his Majesty and his ministers that with regard to the people

of this province and as they doubt not of all the colonies, the charge is unjust.

The house is fully satisfied that your Assembly is too generous and enlarged in sentiment, to believe that this letter proceeds from an ambition of taking the lead or dictating to the other assemblies. They freely submit their opinion to the judgment of others, and shall take it kind in your House to point out to them anything further which may be thought necessary.

This House cannot conclude without expressing their firm confidence in the King, our common head and father, that the united and dutiful supplications of his distressed American subjects will meet with his royal and favorable acceptance.¹⁵

I have already mentioned the circular letter written by the house of representatives to the other colonies, dated the 11th of February, 1768. That union of the colonies in their common danger, by which they became powerful, was the occasion of the greatest perplexity to their enemies on both sides the Atlantic; and it has been ever since their constant endeavor by all manner of arts to destroy it. In this, it must be confessed, they have discovered an unanimity, zeal and perseverance, worthy to be imitated by those who are embarked in the cause of American freedom. It is by united councils, a steady zeal, and a manly fortitude, that this continent must expect to recover its violated rights and liberties. [Adams then takes up the refusal of the Massachusetts House to rescind the circular letter.—*Ed.*]

This determination of the house gave general satisfaction, not only to the people of this province, but of the other colonies also, as well as the friends of liberty in Britain. Indeed, the essential rights of all were involved in the question. Not only the rights of the subjects jointly to petition for the redress of grievances which all alike suffer, but also that of communicating their sentiments freely to each other upon the subject of grievances, and the means of redress. I have often

thought that in this time of common distress, it would be the wisdom of the colonists, more frequently to correspond with, and to be more attentive to the particular circumstances of each other. It seems of late to have been the policy of the enemies of America to point their artillery against one province only; and artfully to draw off the attention of the other colonies, and if possible to render that single province odious to them, while it is suffering ministerial vengeance for the sake of the common cause. But it is hoped that the colonies will be aware of this artifice. At this juncture an attempt to subdue one province to despotic power, is justly to be considered as an attempt to enslave the whole. The colonies "form one political body, of which each is a member." The liberties of the whole are invaded. It is therefore the interest of the whole to support each individual with all their weight and influence. If the parliament may lawfully deprive New York of any of its rights, it may deprive any or all the other colonies of their rights, and nothing can so much encourage such attempts, as a mutual inattention to the interests of each other. To divide and thus to destroy, is the first political maxim in attacking those who are powerful by their union. And when the slightest point touching the freedom of a single colony is agitated, I earnestly wish, that all the rest may with equal ardor support their sister. May the British American colonies be upon their guard, and take care lest by a mutual inattention to the interests of each other, they at length become supine and careless of the grand cause of American liberty, and finally fall a prey to the merciless hand of tyranny.¹⁶

I have often thought it a misfortune, or rather a fault in the friends of American independence and freedom, their not taking care to open every channel of intelligence. The colonies are all embarked in the same bottom. The liberties of all are alike invaded by the same haughty power. The conspirators against their common rights have indeed exerted their brutal force, or applied their insidious arts differently in the several

colonies, as they apprehended would best serve their purpose of oppression and tyranny. How necessary then is it, that *all* should be from time to time early acquainted with the particular circumstances of each, in order that the wisdom and strength of the whole may be employed upon every proper occasion. We have heard of a bloodshed and even civil war in our sister colony North Carolina, and how strange it is, that the best intelligence we have had of that tragical scene, has been brought to us even from England.*

The friends of liberty in this town have lately made a successful attempt to obtain the explicit political sentiments of a great number of towns in this province; and the number is daily increasing. The very attempt was alarming to the adversaries; and the happy effects of it are mortifying to them. I would propose it for your consideration, whether the establishment of Committees of Correspondence among the several towns in every colony, would not tend to promote that general union upon which the security of the whole depends.

The reception of the truly patriotic resolves of the House of Burgesses of Virginia gladdens the hearts of all who are friends to liberty. Our Committee of Correspondence had a special meeting upon this occasion, and determined immediately to circulate copies of them in every town in the province, in order to make them as extensively useful as possible.¹⁷

THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF MAN

Whereas the just rights of his Majesty's subjects of this province, derived to them from the British Constitution, as well as the royal charter, have been lately drawn into ques-

* The frontiersmen of North Carolina formed in 1768 an association called the Regulators, which struggled for democratic demands against the autocratic rule of the seaboard planters and merchants. Governor Tryon sent an army against them in 1771, defeated them, and executed seven of the leaders.—*Ed.*

tion, in order to ascertain the same, this House do unanimously come into the following resolves:

1. *Resolved*, That there are certain essential rights of the British Constitution of government, which are founded in the law of God and nature, and are the common rights of mankind; therefore,

2. *Resolved*, That the inhabitants of this Province are unalienably entitled to those essential rights in common with all men: and that no law of society can, consistent with the law of God and nature, divest them of those rights.

3. *Resolved*, That no man can justly take the property of another without his consent; and that upon this original principle, the right of representation in the same body which exercises the power of making laws for levying taxes, which is one of the main pillars of the British Constitution, is evidently founded.

4. *Resolved*, That this inherent right, together with all other essential rights, liberties, privileges, and immunities of the people of Great Britain, have been fully confirmed to them by Magna Charta, and by former and by later acts of Parliament.

5. *Resolved*, That his Majesty's subjects in America are, in reason and common sense, entitled to the same extent of liberty with his Majesty's subjects in Britain.

6. *Resolved*, That by the declaration of the royal charter of this Province, the inhabitants are entitled to all the rights, liberties, and immunities of free and natural subjects of Great Britain to all intents, purposes, and constructions whatever.

7. *Resolved*, That the inhabitants of this province appear to be entitled to all the rights aforementioned by an act of Parliament, 13th of Geo. II.

8. *Resolved*, That those rights do belong to the inhabitants of this province upon the principle of common justice; their ancestors having settled this country at their sole expense, and their posterity having approved themselves most loyal and faithful subjects of Great Britain.

9. *Resolved*, That every individual in the colonies is as advantageous to Great Britain as if he were in Great Britain and held to pay his full proportion of taxes there; and as the inhabitants of this province pay their full proportion of taxes for the support of his Majesty's government here, it is unreasonable for them to be called upon to pay any part of the charges of the government there.

10. *Resolved*, That the inhabitants of this Province are not, and never have been, represented in the Parliament of Great Britain; and that such a representation there as the subjects in Britain do actually and rightfully enjoy is impracticable for the subjects in America; and further, that in the opinion of this House, the several subordinate powers of legislation in America were constituted upon the apprehensions of this impracticability.

11. *Resolved*, That the only method whereby the constitutional rights of the subjects of this province can be secure, consistent with a subordination to the supreme power of Great Britain, is by the continued exercise of such powers of government as are granted in the royal charter, and a firm adherence to the privileges of the same.

12. *Resolved*, as a just conclusion from some of the foregoing resolves, That all acts made by any power whatever, imposing taxes on the inhabitants, are infringements of our inherent and unalienable rights as men and British subjects, and render void the most valuable declarations of our charter.

13. *Resolved*, That the extension of the powers of the Court of Admiralty within this Province is a most violent infraction of the right of trials by juries—a right which this House, upon the principles of their British ancestors, hold most dear and sacred, it being the only security of the lives, liberties, and properties of his Majesty's subjects here.¹⁸

In the days of the Stuarts, it was looked upon by some men as a high degree of profaneness, for any subject to en-

quire into what was called the mysteries of government. In those days passive obedience, non-resistance, the divine hereditary right of kings, and their being accountable to God alone, were doctrines generally taught, believed and practiced. But behold the sudden transition of human affairs! In the very next reign the people assumed the right of free enquiry, into the nature and end of government, and the conduct of those who were entrusted with it. At the revolution, the British Constitution was again restored to its original principles, declared in the bill of rights, which was afterwards passed into a law, and stands as a bulwark to the natural rights of subjects. "To vindicate these rights, says Mr. Blackstone, when actually violated or attacked, the subjects of England are entitled first to the regular administration and free course of justice in the courts of law, next to the right of petitioning the King and parliament for redress of grievances, and lastly, to the right of having and using arms for self-preservation and defence." These he calls "auxiliary subordinate rights, which serve principally as barriers to protect and maintain inviolate the three great and primary rights of personal security, personal liberty and private property." And that of having arms for their defence he tells us is "a public allowance, under due restrictions, of the natural right of resistance and self preservation, when the sanctions of society and laws are found insufficient to restrain the violence of oppression." How little do those persons attend to the rights of the Constitution, if they know anything about them, who find fault with a late vote of the town, calling upon the inhabitants to provide themselves with arms for their defence at any time; but more especially when they had reason to fear, there would be a necessity of the means of self-preservation against the violence of oppression. Everyone knows that the exercise of the military power is forever dangerous to civil rights. But there are some persons who would, if possibly they could, persuade the people never to make use of their constitutional rights or terrify them from doing it. No wonder that a resolution of this town to keep

arms for its own defence, should be represented as having at bottom a secret intention to oppose the landing of the King's troops.¹⁹

Mr. Locke, in his treatise on government, discovers the weakness of this position, that every man is born a subject to his prince, and therefore is under the perpetual tie of subjection and allegiance; and he shows that express consent alone makes any one a member of any commonwealth. Every man was born naturally free; nothing can make a man a subject of any commonwealth but his actually entering into it by positive engagement and express promise and compact.

Every man being born free, says another distinguished writer, the son of a citizen, arrived at the years of discretion, may examine whether it be convenient for him to join in the society for which he was destined by birth. If he finds that it will be no advantage for him to remain in it, he is at liberty to leave it, preserving as much as his new engagements will allow him, the love and gratitude he owes it. He further says, "There are cases in which a citizen has an absolute right to renounce his country, and abandon it forever." And among other cases in which a citizen has this absolute right, he mentions that when the sovereign or the greater part of the nation will permit the exercise of only one religion in the state, which was the case when our ancestors forsook their native country. They entered into a compact, it is true, with the King of England, and upon certain conditions became his voluntary subjects, not his slaves. But did they enter into any express promise to be subject to the control of the parent state? What is there to show that they were any way bound to obey the acts of the British Parliament, but those very acts themselves?

No one, I believe, will pretend that the parent state receives any authority from the people of this province to make laws for them, or that they have ever consented she should. If the people of this province are a part of the body politic of Great

Britain, they have, as such, a right to be consulted in the making of all acts of the British Parliament of what nature soever. If they are a separate body politic, and are free, they have a right equal to that of the people of Great Britain to make laws for themselves, and are no more than they subject to the control of any legislature but their own. This was the reason given by our ancestors why they should not be bound by the acts of Parliament, because not being represented in Parliament, the public approbation of the province had not made them laws. And this is the reason why their posterity do not hold themselves rightly obliged to submit to the revenue acts now in being, because they never consented to them.²⁰

1. NATURAL RIGHTS OF THE COLONISTS AS MEN

Among the natural rights of the Colonists are these: First, a right to life; Secondly to liberty; Thirdly to property; together with the right to support and defend them in the best manner they can. These are evident branches of, rather than deductions from, the duty of self-preservation, commonly called the first law of nature.

All men have a right to remain in a state of nature as long as they please; and in case of intolerable oppression, civil or religious, to leave the society they belong to, and enter into another.

When men enter into society, it is by voluntary consent; and they have a right to demand and insist upon the performance of such conditions and previous limitations as form an equitable original compact.

Every natural right not expressly given up, or from the nature of a social compact, necessarily ceded, remains.

All positive and civil laws should conform, as far as possible, to the law of natural reason and equity.

As neither reason requires nor religion permits the contrary, every man living in or out of a state of civil society, has a right peaceably and quietly to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience.

The natural liberty of men, by entering into society, is abridged or restrained so far only as is necessary for the great end of society, the best good of the whole.

In the state of nature, every man is, under God, judge and sole judge of his own rights and of the injuries done him. By entering into society he agrees to an arbiter or indifferent judge between him and his neighbors; but he no more renounces his original right, than by taking a cause out of the ordinary course of law, and leaving the decision to referees or indifferent arbitrations.

"The natural liberty of man is to be free from any superior power on earth, and not to be under the will or legislative authority of man; but only to have the law of nature for his rule."

... the right to freedom being the gift of God Almighty, it is not in the power of man to alienate this gift, and voluntarily become a slave.

2. THE RIGHTS OF THE COLONISTS AS CHRISTIANS

By the act of the British Parliament commonly called the Toleration Act, every subject in England except Papists, &c., was restored to, and re-established in, his natural right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. And, by the charter of this Province, it is granted, ordained, and established that there shall be liberty of conscience allowed in the worship of God to all christians except Papists, inhabiting or which shall inhabit or be resident within said Province or territory.

3. THE RIGHTS OF THE COLONISTS AS SUBJECTS

A commonwealth or state is a body politic or civil society of men, united together to promote their mutual safety and prosperity, by means of their union.

The absolute rights of Englishmen, and all freemen in or out of civil society, are principally personal security, personal liberty, and private property.

All persons born in the British American colonies are, by the laws of God and nature and by the common law of England,

exclusive of all charters from the crown, well entitled, and by the acts of the British Parliament are declared to be entitled to all the natural, essential, inherent and inseparable rights, liberties, and privileges of subjects born in Great Britain or within the realm. Among those rights are the following:

First, "The first fundamental positive law of all commonwealths or states, is the establishing the legislative power."

Secondly, the Legislative has no right to absolute arbitrary power over the lives and fortunes of the people.

"There shall be one rule of justice for rich and poor, for the favorite in court, and the countryman at the plough."

Thirdly, the supreme power cannot justly take from any man, any part of his property without his consent, in person or by his representative.

It is utterly irreconcilable to these principles, and to many other fundamental maxims of the common law, common sense, and reason, that a British House of Commons should have a right at pleasure to give and grant the property of the Colonists. That these Colonists are well entitled to all the essential rights, liberties, and privileges of men and freemen born in Britain, is manifest.²¹

CREATING PUBLIC SENTIMENT

...when the people are oppressed, when their rights are infringed, when their property is invaded, when taskmasters are set over them, when unconstitutional acts are executed by a naval force before their eyes, and they are daily threatened with military troops, when their legislative is dissolved, and what government is left, is as secret as a Divan, when placemen and their underlings swarm about them, and pensioners begin to make an insolent appearance—in such circumstances the people will be discontented, and they are not to be blamed; their minds will be irritated as long as they have any sense of honor, liberty, and virtue. In such circumstances, while they

have the spirit of freemen, they will boldly assert their freedom, and they are to be justified in so doing. I know very well that to murmur, or even to whisper a complaint, some men call a riotous spirit. But they are in the right of it to complain, and complain aloud. And they *will* complain, till they are either redressed, or become poor, deluded, miserable, ductile dupes, fitted to be made the slaves of arbitrary power.²²

... let me assure Philanthrop, that I am fully of his mind, that a true patriot "will not from private views, or by any ways or means, foment and cherish groundless fears and jealousies." But perhaps we may not be so well agreed in our determination, *when* the fears and jealousies of our fellow citizens are groundless. It is, I believe, the general opinion of judicious men, that at present there are good grounds to apprehend a settled design to enslave and ruin the colonies; and that some men of figure and station in America have adopted the plan, and would gladly lull the people to sleep, the easier to put it in execution. But I believe Philanthrop would be far from acknowledging that *he* is of that opinion. The fears and jealousies of the people are not always groundless. And when they become general, it is not to be presumed that they are; for the people in general seldom complain, without some good reason. The inhabitants of this continent are not to be duped "by an artful use of the words liberty and slavery, in an application to their passions," as Philanthrop would have us think they are. The true patriot, therefore, will enquire into the causes of the fears and jealousies of his countrymen; and if he finds they are not groundless, he will be far from endeavoring to allay or stifle them. On the contrary, he will by all proper means in his power foment and cherish them. He will, as far as he is able, keep the attention of his fellow citizens awake to their grievances; and not suffer them to be at rest, till the causes of their just complaints are removed. Philan-

throp may tell us of the hazard "of disturbing and inflaming the minds of the multitude whose passions know no bounds." A traitor to the Constitution alone can dread this. The multitude I am speaking of, is the body of the people, no contemptible multitude, for whose sake government is instituted; or rather, who have themselves erected it, solely for their own good, to whom even kings and all in subordination to them are, strictly speaking, servants and not masters.

Philanthrop, I think, speaks somewhat unintelligibly, when he tells us that the well-being and happiness of the whole depends upon subordination as if mankind submitted to government for the sake of being subordinate. In the state of nature there was subordination. The weaker was by force made to bow down to the more powerful. This is still the unhappy lot of a great part of the world, under government. Mankind have entered into political societies, rather for the sake of restoring equality. I am apt to think, that constitution of civil government which admits equality in the most extensive degree, consistent with the true design of government, is the best.²³

If the liberties of America are ever completely ruined, of which, in my opinion, there is now the utmost danger, it will in all probability be the consequence of a mistaken notion of prudence, which leads men to acquiesce in measures of the most destructive tendency for the sake of present ease. When designs are formed to raze the very foundation of a free government, those few who are to erect their grandeur and fortunes upon the general ruin will employ every art to soothe the devoted people into a state of indolence, inattention, and security, which is forever the forerunner of slavery. They are alarmed at nothing so much as attempts to awaken the people to jealousy and watchfulness; and it has been an old game, played over and over again, to hold up the men who would rouse their fellow citizens and countrymen to a sense of their real danger, and spirit them to the most zealous activity in

the use of all proper means for the preservation of the public liberty, as "pretended patriots," "intemperate politicians," rash hot-headed men, incendiaries, wretched desperadoes, who, as was once said of the best of men, would turn the world upside down, or have done it already. But he must have a small share of fortitude indeed, who is put out of countenance by hard speeches without sense and meaning, or affrighted from the path of duty by the rude language of Billingsgate. For my own part, I smile contemptuously at such unmanly efforts.²⁴

II. THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

DECLARE AMERICA INDEPENDENT

I am perfectly satisfied with the reasons you offer to show the necessity of a public and explicit Declaration of Independency. I cannot conceive what good reason can be assigned against it. Will it widen the breach? This would be a strange question after we have raised armies and fought battles with the British troops, set up an American navy, permitted the inhabitants of these colonies to fit out armed vessels to cruise on all ships belonging to any of the inhabitants of Great Britain, declaring them the enemies of the united colonies, and torn into shivers their Acts of Trade, by allowing commerce subject to regulations to be made by ourselves with the people of all countries but such as are subjects of the British King. It cannot surely after all this be imagined that we consider ourselves or mean to be considered by others in any State but that of independence. But moderate Whigs are disgusted with our mentioning the word! Sensible Tories are better politicians. They know, that no foreign power can consistently yield comfort to rebels, or enter into any kind of treaty with these colonies till they declare themselves free and independent. They are in hopes that by our protracting this decisive step, we shall grow weary of war, and that for want of foreign connections and assistance we shall be driven to the necessity of acknowledging the tyrant and submitting to the tyranny. These are the hopes and expectations of Tories, while

moderate gentlemen are flattering themselves with the prospect of reconciliation when the Commissioners that are talked of shall arrive. But let us not be impatient. It requires time to convince the doubting and inspire the timid.¹

The ideas of independence spread far and wide among the colonies. Many of the leading men see the absurdity of supposing that allegiance is due to a sovereign who has already thrown us out of his protection. I was very solicitous the last fall to have governments set up by the people in every colony. It appeared to me to be necessary for many reasons. When this is done, and I am inclined to think it will be soon, the colonies will feel their independence, the way will be prepared for a confederation, and one government may be formed with the consent of the whole, a distinct state composed of all the colonies with a common legislature for great and general purposes. This I was in hopes would have been the work of the last winter. I am disappointed, but I bear it tolerably well. There has been much to do to confirm doubting friends and fortify the timid. The Boston port bill suddenly wrought a union of the colonies which could not be brought about by the industry of years in reasoning on the necessity of it for the common safety. Since the memorable 19th of April, one event has brought another on, till Boston sees her deliverance from those more than savage troops upon which the execrable tyrant so much relied for the completion of his horrid conspiracies, and America has furnished herself with more than seventy battalions for her defense. The burning of Norfolk and the hostilities committed in North Carolina have kindled the resentment of our Southern brethren, who once thought their Eastern friends hot headed and rash; now indeed the tone is altered and it is said that the coolness and moderation of the one is necessary to allay the heat of the other. There is a reason that would induce one even to wish for the speedy arrival of the British troops that are expected at the Southward. I think our friends are well prepared for them, and one

battle would do more towards a Declaration of Independency than a long chain of conclusive arguments in a provincial convention or the Continental Congress.²

NO RECONCILIATION WITH BRITAIN

I most heartily congratulate you on the happy and important news from Europe. France has acted with magnanimity; while Britain continues to discover that meanness and poverty of spirit, which renders her still more than ever contemptible in the eyes of all sensible people. The moderation of France is such as becomes a great and powerful nation.

Commissioners, we are again told, are coming out to treat with us. This is what we had reason to expect. Her only design is to amuse us and thereby to retard our operations, till she can land her utmost force in America. We see plainly what part we are to take; to be beforehand of her and by an early stroke to give her a mortal wound. If we delay our vigorous exertions till the commissioners arrive, the people abroad may, many of them will be amused with the flattering prospect of peace, and will think it strange if we do not consent to a cessation of arms till propositions can be made and digested. This carries with it an air of plausibility; but from the moment we are brought into the snare, we may tremble for the consequence. As there are everywhere awful Tories enough, to distract the minds of the people, would it not be wise for the Congress by a publication of their own to set this important intelligence in a clear light before them, and fix in their minds the first impressions in favor of truth? For I do assure you, it begins to be whispered by the Tories and as soon as they dare to do it they will speak aloud, that this is but a French finesse and that Britain is the only real friend of America. Should not the people be informed with the authority of Congress that Britain persists in claiming a right to tax them and that the new or intended Act of Parliament expressly declares her intention to be only a suspension of the

exercise of the right till she shall please again to exercise it, that is, till she shall have lulled them into a state of security? They are allowed, as one of our friends expresses it, to proclaim a cessation of hostilities, and revoke their proclamation, as soon as in confidence of it our militia are allowed to go home. They may suspend the operation of prohibitory Acts of Trade, and take off that suspension where our merchants in consequence of it shall have been induced to send their ships to sea. In short, they may do everything that may tend to distract and divide us, but nothing that can afford us security. The British Court have nothing in view but to divide by means of their commissioners. Dr. Franklin in a letter of the 2nd of March informs me that America at present stands in the highest light of esteem throughout Europe, and he adds, a return to dependence on England would sink her into eternal contempt.³

RAISE POPULAR MORALE

I am exceedingly concerned to find by your letter as well as those of my other friends that so little attention has been given to a matter of such weighty importance as the fortifying the harbor of Boston. To what can this be attributed? Is it not wise to prevent the enemies making use of every avenue, especially those which lead into the capital of our country? I hope no little party animosities even exist, much less prevail in our councils to obstruct so necessary a measure. This will, I think, be an important summer to America; I confide therefore in the wisdom of our colony, and that they will lay aside the consideration of smaller matters for the present, and bend their whole attention to the necessary means for the common safety.

It was agreed that the troops in Boston be augmented to six thousand. But what will avail the ordering additional regiments if men will not enlist? Do our countrymen want animation at a time when all is at stake? Your presses have been too long silent. What are your Committees of Corre-

spondence about? I hear nothing of circular letters, of joint committees, etc. Such methods have in times past raised the spirits of the people, drawn off their attention from picking up pins, and directed their views to great objects.⁴

CRUSH THE TORIES

I am much concerned to hear that the Tories in Boston and Massachusetts Bay have lately grown insolent and that no measures are taken to suppress their insolence. They are the most virulent, and I am of opinion the most dangerous, enemies of America. They do not, indeed, openly appear in arms, but they do more mischief secretly. I am very apprehensive that they greatly operate to the preventing enlistments and doing other essential injury to our cause. If they are not properly dealt with, I am persuaded the public will much regret the omission very soon. I do not wish for needless severities; but effectual measures, and severe ones if others are insufficient, to prevent their pernicious councils and machinations, I think ought to be taken, and that without any delay. It will be humanity shown to millions who are in more danger of being reduced to thralldom and misery by those wretches than by British and Hessian barbarians. I cannot conceive why a law is not made declaratory of treason and other crimes and properly to punish those who are guilty of them. If to conspire the death of a king is treason, and worthy of death, surely a conspiracy to ruin a state deserves no less a punishment. I have reason to think you have a number of such conspirators among you; and believe me, you will soon repent of it, if you do not speedily take notice of them. But let me ask you, my friend, whether some of the late addressers, protesters and associators are not seen in the circles, in the houses and at the tables of Whigs? Is there not reason to expect that those who exiled themselves through fear of the just vengeance of their countrymen, will be invited by the kind treatment of those who have equal reason to dread that vengeance, to return into the bosom of their much injured country? ⁵

III. DEMOCRACY AND THE NEW NATION

AGAINST HEREDITARY NOBILITY

Mr. Higginson was so obliging as to show me your letter to him dated the 4th of March. I was happy in having adopted an opinion of the Cincinnati so similar to what I found yours to be. I think I am as sensible as any man ought to be of the important services of our late army. I am very desirous that their full share of merit may be gratefully acknowledged and rewarded by the country. This would have been done (for the prejudice of the people against the gratuity of five years' pay began to subside) had they not adopted a plan so disgusting to the common feeling. It appears wonderful that they could imagine a people who had freely spent their blood and treasure in support of their equal rights and liberties, could so soon be reconciled to the odious hereditary distinction of families. This country must be humiliated and debased to a great degree, before they will patiently bear to see individuals stalking with these assumed honorary badges, and proudly boasting, "These are the distinctions of *our* blood." I cannot think that many of our officers entertained such an idea of haughty pre-eminence; but the human mind is so captivated with the thought of being elevated above the ignoble vulgar, that their sons, if they should not themselves, when they perceive the multitude grown giddy with gazing, may assume more than the mere pageantry of nobility. I confess I do not

barely dislike the order. With you I think it dangerous and look upon it with the eye of jealousy.¹

TOWARDS THE SECOND WAR OF INDEPENDENCE, 1812

Great Britain appears to be not a cordial friend to us though she has solemnly entered into a treaty of peace. She seems to have meant no more than a truce. A sensible gentleman very lately from Canada informs me that General Haldiman, who is going to England, has ordered those posts to be strengthened which, by treaty, were to be delivered to us. Encroachments are made, as I apprehend, on our Eastern territories. Our fishery, under some frivolous pretence, may be next interrupted. Should we not guard ourselves against British intrigues and factions? Her emissaries, under the guise of merchants, repenting refugees, schoolmasters, and other characters, unless care is taken, may effect another and fatal revolution.²

THE NATURE OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

I lately received your letter of the 18th of October. The sentiments and observations contained in it demand my attention.

A republic, you tell me, is a government in which "the people have an essential *share* in the sovereignty." Is not the *whole* sovereignty, my friend, essentially in the people? Is not government designed for the welfare and happiness of all the people? And is it not the uncontrollable, essential right of the people to amend and alter or annul their Constitution, and frame a new one, whenever they shall think it will better promote their own welfare and happiness to do it? That the sovereignty resides in the people, is a political doctrine which

I have never heard an American politician seriously deny. The Constitutions of the American States reserve to the people the exercise of the rights of sovereignty by the annual or biennial election of their governors, senators, and representatives; and by empowering their own representatives to impeach the greatest officers of the state before the Senators, who are also chosen by themselves. *We the people*, is the style of the Federal Constitution; they adopted it; and, conformably to it, they delegate the exercise of the powers of government to particular persons, who, after short intervals, resign their powers to the people; and they will re-elect them, or appoint others, as they think fit.

... the son of an excellent man may never inherit the great qualities of his father; this is a common observation, and there are many instances of its truth. Should we not, therefore, conclude that hereditary nobility is a solecism in government? Their lordships' sons or grandsons may be destitute of the faintest feelings of honor or honesty, and yet retain an essential share in the government, by right of inheritance from ancestors who may have been the minions of ministers, the favorites of mistresses, or men of real and distinguished merit. The same may be said of hereditary kings. Their successors may also become so degenerated and corrupt as to have neither inclination nor capacity to know the extent and limits of their own powers, nor, consequently, those of others. Much safer is it, and much more does it tend to promote the welfare and happiness of society, to fill up the offices of government, after the mode prescribed in the American Constitution, by frequent elections of the people. They may, indeed, be deceived in their choice; they sometimes are. But the evil is not incurable, the remedy is always near; they will feel their mistakes and correct them.

I am very willing to agree with you in thinking that improvements in knowledge and benevolence receive much assistance from the principles and systems of good government. But is it not as true that, without knowledge and benevolence, men

would neither have been capable nor disposed to search for the principles or form the system? Should we not, my friend, bear a grateful remembrance of our pious and benevolent ancestors, who early laid plans of education, by which means wisdom, knowledge, and virtue have been generally diffused among the body of the people, and they have been enabled to form and establish a civil Constitution calculated for the preservation of their rights and liberties? This Constitution was evidently founded in the expectation of the further progress and *extraordinary* degrees of virtue. It enjoins the encouragement of all seminaries of literature, which are the nurseries of virtue, depending upon these for the support of government, rather than titles, splendor, or force. Mr. Hume may call this a "chimerical project"; I am far from thinking the people can be deceived by urging upon them a dependence on the more general prevalence of knowledge and virtue. It is one of the most essential means of further and still further improvements in society, and of correcting and amending moral sentiments and habits and political institutions.

"It is a fixed principle that all good government is, and must be, republican." You have my hearty concurrence. The body of the people in this country are not so ignorant as those in England were in the time of the Interregnum Parliament. They are better educated. They will not easily be prevailed upon to believe that "a republican is as unamiable as a witch, a blasphemer, a rebel, or a tyrant." So well assured are they that their liberties are best secured by their own frequent and free election of fit persons to be the essential sharers in the administration of their government, and that this form of government is truly *republican*, that the body of the people will not be persuaded nor compelled to "renounce, detest, and execrate" the very word *republican* "as the English do."

We agree in the utility of universal education; but "will nations agree in it as fully and extensively as we do?" Why should they not? It would not be fair to conclude that, because they have not yet been disposed to agree in it, they

never will. It is allowed that the present age is more enlightened than former ones. Freedom of inquiry is certainly more encouraged; the feelings of humanity have softened the heart; the true principles of civil and religious liberty are better understood; tyranny, in all its shapes, is more detested, and bigotry, if not still blind, must be mortified to see that she is despised. Such an age may afford at least a flattering expectation that nations as well as individuals will view the utility of universal education in so strong a light as to induce sufficient national patronage and support. Future ages will probably be more enlightened than this.

The love of liberty is interwoven in the soul of man—"so it is in that of a wolf." However irrational, ungenerous, and unsocial the love of liberty may be in a rude savage, he is capable of being enlightened by experience, reflection, education, and civil and political institutions. But the nature of the wolf is, and ever will be, confined to running in the forest to satisfy his hunger and his brutal appetites.

Among the numbers of men, my friend, are to be found not only those who have "preferred ease, slumber, and good cheer to liberty," but others who have eagerly sought after thrones and sceptres, hereditary shares in sovereignty, riches and splendor, titles, stars, garters, crosses, eagles, and many other childish playthings, at the expense of real nobility, without one thought or care for the liberty and happiness of the rest of mankind.

"The people who have no property feel the power of governing by a majority, and ever attack those who have property." Be this as it may, it has been known that such deceitful tricks have been practiced by some of the rich upon their unsuspecting fellow-citizens, to turn the determination of questions so as to answer their own selfish purposes.

But "by nobles," who have prevented "one hideous despotism as horrid as that of Turkey from falling to the lot of every nation of Europe," you mean, "not particularly an hereditary nobility, or any particular modification, but the natural and

actual aristocracy among mankind," the existence of which I am not disposed to deny. Where is this aristocracy found? Among men of all ranks and conditions. Education is within the power of men and societies of men; wise and judicious modes of education, patronized and supported by communities, will draw together the sons of the rich and the poor, among whom it makes no distinction. Education inures men to thinking and reflection, to reasoning and demonstration. The man of good understanding, who has been well educated, and improves these advantages as far as his circumstances will allow, in promoting the happiness of mankind, in my opinion, and I am inclined to think in yours, is indeed "well born." ³

AID THE REPUBLIC OF FRANCE

We are met at a very critical period. The baneful influence of war in Europe has already too far extended itself into this remote region. A war of kings and nobles against the equal rights of men. Their first object was to control the common right of all civil societies, by frustrating the attempt of a magnanimous nation to establish a constitution of government for themselves according to their own mind. More lately the nefarious design has been to crush the new formed republic in its infancy. But the God of Armies, who favors the brave in a righteous cause, has hitherto appeared for its protection, and crowned the astonishing efforts of its defenders with astonishing victories.

Great Britain takes an active part with the mighty combination of Kings. Indeed, it does not appear that she has yet made a demand on our confederate republic to join the League, a demand which we are well informed she has made upon some of the neutral republics of Europe. But, whilst we have preserved the most strict neutrality towards the belligerent powers of Europe in observance of treaties made under the

authority of the United States which are the supreme law of the land, she, for the sake of aiding the cause in which she is so deeply engaged, has employed her naval force in committing depredations on our lawful and unprotected commerce. Thus in fact she has commenced hostilities. The Federal Government, although very solicitous, if possible, to prevent the calamities of war, have meditated measures preparatory for the event.

It was a declared intention of the people of the United States, when they adopted our present constitution, "to form a more perfect union"—an important object indeed. The deliberate voice of the people is commonly the voice of reason. The voice of the people ought therefore to be attended to. Union formed upon the genuine republican principles and views of our political institutions, by combining our strength, will have a powerful tendency, in a time of war, to reduce an unreasonable enemy to terms of justice, and the re-establishment of tranquillity, and in peace to secure the blessings of equal liberty to the present and future generations.⁴

PUBLIC EDUCATION

It is with satisfaction that I have observed the patriotic exertions of worthy citizens, to establish academies in various parts of this commonwealth. It discovers a zeal highly to be commended. But while it is acknowledged that great advantages have been derived from these institutions, perhaps it may be justly apprehended that multiplying them, may have a tendency to injure the ancient and beneficial mode of education in town grammar schools. The peculiar advantage of such schools is, that the poor and the rich may derive equal benefit from them; but none excepting the more wealthy, generally speaking, can avail themselves of the benefits of the academies. Should these institutions detach the attention and influence of the wealthy from the generous support of town

schools, is it not to be feared that useful learning, instruction and social feelings in the early parts of life may cease to be so equally and universally disseminated, as it has heretofore been? ⁵

THE ELECTION OF JEFFERSON

I sincerely congratulate our country on the arrival of the day of glory which has called you to the first office in the administration of our federal government. Your warm feelings of friendship must certainly have carried you to a higher tone of expression than my utmost merits will bear. If I have at any time been avoided or frowned on, your kind ejaculation in the language of the most perfect friend of man, surpasses every injury. The storm is now over, and we are in port, and I dare say the ship will be rigged for her proper service; she must also be well manned, and very carefully officered; no man can sustain an office, who cannot conform to the principles by which he must be governed. With you, I hope, we shall once more see harmony restored; but after so severe and long a storm, it will take a proportionable time to still the raging of the waves. The world has been governed by prejudice and passion which can never be friendly to truth; and while you nobly resolve to retain those principles of candor and of justice resulting from a free elective representative government, such as they have been taught to hate and despise, you must depend upon being hated yourself, because they hate your principles. Not a man of them dare openly to despise you. Your inaugural speech, to say nothing of your eminent services to the acceptance of our country, will secure you from contempt.⁶

REFERENCE NOTES

INTRODUCTION

SAMUEL ADAMS—ORGANIZER AND PROPAGANDIST

1. *Warren-Adams Letters* (2 vols.). Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, 1917-25. Letter to James Warren, Vol. I, pp. 195-96.
2. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 14.
3. H. A. Cushing, ed., *The Writings of Samuel Adams* (4 vols.). G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1904-08; and *Warren-Adams Letters*.
4. William V. Wells, *The Life and Public Services of Samuel Adams* (3 vols.). Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1865, Vol. II, p. 391.
5. John C. Miller, *Sam Adams, Pioneer in Propaganda*. Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1936, p. 149.
6. Letter to James Warren, May 12, 1776. Sam Adams Papers, New York Public Library, Ms. Division.
7. *Ibid.*, letter, April 24, 1801.
8. Miller, *op. cit.*, pp. 3 and 69.
9. Ralph Volney Harlow, *Samuel Adams, Promoter of the American Revolution*. Henry Holt & Co., 1923, p. 38.
10. *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (20 vols.). Jefferson Memorial Association, Washington, D. C., 1904. Vol. I, p. 180 and X, p. 250.
11. *A Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston*, Vol. 16, pp. 121-22.
12. Wells, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 75-77.
13. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 105.
14. Herbert Morais, "The Artisan Democracy and the American Revolution," in *Science and Society*, Summer, 1942. This contains an occupational analysis of the Sons of Liberty.
15. Jack Hardy, *The First American Revolution*. International Publishers, New York, 1937, p. 57.
16. Letter to J.S., December 20, 1765. Sam Adams Papers.
17. *Ibid.*, Letter to Christopher Gadsden, December 11, 1766.

18. Article signed "Candidus," *Boston Gazette*, August 19, 1771.
19. Sam Adams Papers.
20. *Record Commissioners Report*, Vol. 16, p. 264.
21. Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 161.
22. *Boston Gazette*, December 5, 1768.
23. *Ibid.*, December 24, 1770.
24. Hardy, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
25. *Boston Gazette*, January 8, 1770.
26. *Ibid.*, September 16, 1771.
27. *Ibid.*, August 19, 1771.
28. *Record Commissioners Report*, Vol. 18, p. 143.
29. Richard Henry Lee, *The Life of Arthur Lee* (2 vols.). Wells & Lilly, Boston, 1829. Vol. II, pp. 209-11.
30. Committees of Correspondence Papers, New York Public Library, Ms. Division.
31. *Ibid.*, May 13, 1774.
32. A. H. Hoyt, *Donations to the People of Boston Suffering under the Port Bill*. New England Historical and Genealogical Register, Boston, July, 1876.
33. Wells, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 208.
34. J. K. Hosmer, *Samuel Adams*. Houghton, Mifflin, Boston and New York, 1885, p. 314.
35. Cushing, *op. cit.*, see letter to G.W., November 11, 1765, Vol. I, p. 28.
36. Letter to Samuel Cooper. Sam Adams Papers.
37. *Ibid.*, Letter to Joseph Hawley, April 15, 1776.
38. *Ibid.*, Letter to Samuel Cooper, April 30, 1776.
39. Letter to Richard Henry Lee, April 20, 1778. Ms. in possession of the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.
40. *Massachusetts Spy*, July 16, 1778.
41. *Writings*, Vol. XV, p. 201.
42. Letter to John Pitts, February 16, 1777. Sam Adams Papers.
43. For Adams' work in Congress, see *Journals of the Continental Congress*.
44. *Writings*, Vol. XV, p. 201.
45. Letter to Benjamin Kent, July 27, 1776. Sam Adams Papers.
46. Wells, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 205.
47. Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 371.
48. *Works of Daniel Webster* (6 vols.). Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1877. Vol. I, p. 303.
49. Samuel B. Harding, *The Contest over the Ratification of the Federal Constitution in the State of Massachusetts*. Longmans, Green & Co., New York, 1896, pp. 88-89.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 98.
51. Message to the Legislature, May 31, 1794. *Independent Chronicle*, June 2, 1794.
52. *Ibid.*, Letter to Richard Henry Lee, December 23, 1784.
53. Charles R. King, *Life and Correspondence of Rufus King* (6 vols.), G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1894-1900. Vol. II, p. 31.
54. *Independent Chronicle*, April 25, 1799.
55. April 24, 1801. Sam Adams Papers.
56. *Writings*, Vol. X, p. 251.

I. THE FIGHT OF THE COLONIES AGAINST OPPRESSION

1. From instructions of the town of Boston to its representatives in the General Court, September 18, 1765. *Record Commissioners Report*, Vol. 16, pp. 155-56.
2. From letter to Dennys De Berdt, December 21, 1765. Signed by several members of the Assembly as individuals. Wells, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 104-05.
3. From letter of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts to Dennys De Berdt, January 12, 1768. *Boston Gazette*, April 4, 1768.
4. From article signed "Alfred," *ibid.*, October 2, 1769.
5. From article signed "Vindex," *ibid.*, December 5, 1768.
6. From article signed "Vindex," *ibid.*, December 12, 1768.
7. From article signed "Vindex," *ibid.*, December 10, 1770.
8. From article signed "Vindex," *ibid.*, December 24, 1770.
9. From article signed "Determinatus," *ibid.*, January 8, 1770.
10. From article signed "Candidus," *ibid.*, August 19, 1771.
11. From resolution of the Town of Boston, November 5, 1773. *Record Commissioners Report*, Vol. 18, pp. 142-43.
12. From letter to Arthur Lee, December 31, 1773, Lee, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 209-11.
13. From letter of the Committee of Correspondence to other Committees of Correspondence, December 17, 1773. Committee of Correspondence Papers, Minutes No. 6.
14. The Town of Boston to the Colonies, May 13, 1774, *ibid.*, General Correspondence, 1774.
15. From proceedings of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts to the Speakers of the other Houses of Representatives, February 11, 1768. Sam Adams Papers.
16. From article signed "Candidus," *Boston Gazette*, September 16, 1771.
17. From letter to Christopher Gadsden, December 11, 1766. Sam Adams Papers.
18. From the resolutions of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, October 29, 1765. Wells, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 75-77.
19. From article signed "E. A.," *Boston Gazette*, February 27, 1769.
20. From article signed "Valerius Poplicola," *ibid.*, October 28, 1771.
21. From resolutions adopted by the town of Boston, November 20, 1772. *Record Commissioners Report*, Vol. 18, pp. 95-98.
22. From article signed "Determinatus," *Boston Gazette*, August 8, 1768.
23. From article signed "Vindex," *ibid.*, January 21, 1771.
24. From article signed "Candidus," *ibid.*, December 9, 1771.

II. THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

1. From letter to Joseph Hawley, April 15, 1776. Sam Adams Papers.
2. *Ibid.*, from letter to Samuel Cooper, April 30, 1776.
3. From letter to Richard Henry Lee, April 20, 1778. Ms. in pos-
- session of the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.
4. From letter to James Warren, May 12, 1776. Sam Adams Papers.
5. *Ibid.*, from letter to John Pitts, February 15, 1777.

III. THE NEW NATION

1. From letter to Elbridge Gerry, April 19, 1784. Sam Adams Papers.
2. *Ibid.*, from letter to Richard Henry Lee, December 23, 1784.
3. From letter to Vice-President John Adams, November 25, 1790. Wells, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 308-13.
4. From message to the Legislature of Massachusetts, May 31, 1794. *Independent Chronicle*, June 2, 1794.
5. From message to the Legislature of Massachusetts, June 3, 1795. *Independent Chronicle*, June 4, 1795.
6. From letter to Thomas Jefferson, April 24, 1801. Sam Adams Papers.